SCRIBNER'S MAGAZINE

VOL. XCII, NO. 2 AUGUST, 1932

John Galsworthy's NEW NOVEL "Flowering Wilderness" begins in the September Scribner's Magazine

• • •

Unprecedented in magazine publishing, the complete full-length novel will be published in three parts.

• • •

The love of a young English girl, daughter of a retired general, for a sophisticated poet, about whose life in the East strange rumors reached London, is the theme of the new novel by England's leading writer of fiction. The "empire" circles in London are shocked by the act of Wilfrid Desert. Dinny Cherrell finds herself caught between love and a great tradition. The story moves swiftly to its climax and is in Mr. Galsworthy's best manner.

• • •

Other Features

Frank R. Kent forecasts the Presidential campaign

An Epistle to Pacifists — Is "Security" a Bugbear? *by Albert Guérard*

Have Americans Lost Their Nerve? *by Gilbert Seldes*

In Defense of the Happy Home *by Charlotte Morris Wright*

Life in the United States
Beer Town — *by Meridel LeSueur*
Shipwreck — *by Helen Bird*

Short Stories by *Grace Flandrau*, *Alvah C. Bessie*

Note. To be sure of a copy of the September SCRIBNER'S MAGAZINE containing the beginning of "Flowering Wilderness," by John Galsworthy, and a dozen other features, place an order with your newsdealer in advance.

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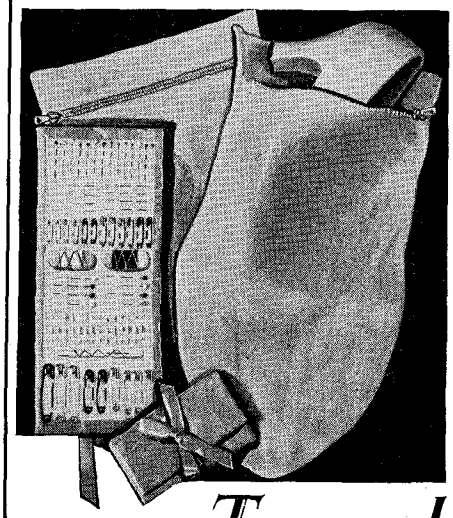

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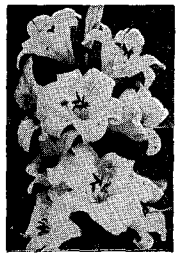

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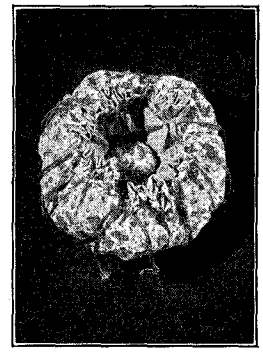
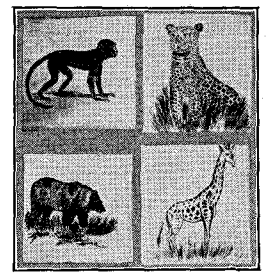
So many people want bird baths, but can't find one that is light in weight, durable, and inexpensive. This one was especially designed by an expert in this line, and has the additional advantage of being easily moved, for the base simply sticks into the ground. Is of metal, enamelled in onyx or light marble finish, 12 inches across and 15 inches high. $3, postpaid.

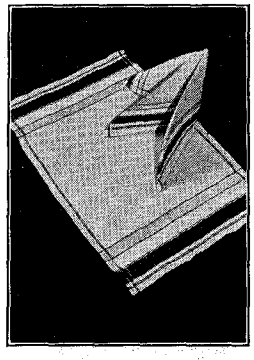


Whenever I travel I find that inevitably the cold-cream jar, hairpins, lotion bottle, and powder all gravitate to one and the same spot, and disaster results. This utility bag has a series of six compartments which take care of the whole affair neatly. The centre space leaves room for any extras. In gay cotton prints—blue, rose, yellow, or green. $2, postpaid.

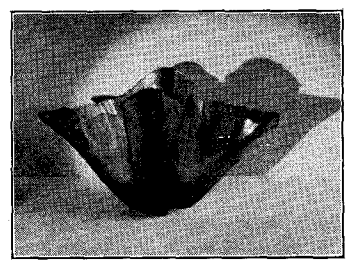
I like bargains as well as you do, and here is a grand one. The beverage set here shown includes a big tall modern pitcher with smart black handle to match the long, 22-inch serving tray. Just fitting around it are four small shiny trays large enough for a glass and sandwich. The set is entirely made of heavy polished aluminum, non-tarnishable and light. The large tray is black aluminum, a new product just put on the market. All six pieces complete, $4.95. Add 35 cents for postage. (Glasses not included.)



Hand-drawn tiles by a museum artist and illustrator known for his specialty of animal subjects. Each tile is authentic and a work of art. Can be ordered separately to be used under vases, teapots, etc., or in groups for fireplaces or bathrooms. Shown are a monkey, leopard, bear, and giraffe, but any animal may be had. These are sold through this one shop alone, and the production is limited. Each tile, six inches across, price $6. Special orders executed for fish or birds as well.



For informal lunching, a gay and practical set which includes a long runner, eight place oblongs, and eight napkins. The material is heavy Italian crash linen, with woven borders of burnt orange and blue. Colors fast, of course, and the whole thing only $6.75, postpaid.



The lovely, soft deep blue of this vase makes it a perfect setting for flowers. It is an unusual shape, 12 inches across its widest part and about 6 inches the opposite way. Flowers spread gracefully over its sides. Can be had in crystal, or green as well. Price, $3.50, express collect.

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LITERARY SIGN-POSTS

MEN AND MEMORIES, VOL. 2, BY WILLIAM ROTHENSTEIN. *Coward, McCann.* $5.

I have never understood how reviewers could criticise a book of this sort. It is a collection of letters and anecdotes and opinions, but short of quoting these and saying that the book is delightful, I wouldn't know how to handle it. If you were acquainted with the men and women referred to, you could possibly contradict Will Rothenstein. Otherwise it is like contradicting a man who says that his name is Smythe. If he says it is, it is.

You can bring up the incident at the Duchess of Sutherland's when a team of apache dancers entertained and Rothenstein, shocked, spoke glumly of the end of an epoch. That might be proof of Nice Nellieism but it is the merest cavil at a man who recognized the genius of Epstein and got him the money which made his first years in London possible. He appreciated W. H. Hudson when London was laughing at "Green Mansions" for its naïveté. He had the courage and decency to write a kind word to Bertrand Russell when the latter was the object of the bitterest hatred for his anti-war stand.

Rothenstein knew everybody of importance of his time—Conrad, Shaw, Wells, Tagore, Galsworthy, Bennett, Augustus John, Orpen, Max Beerbohm, and endless other writers and painters. If you like literary reminiscences, I can't imagine anything better.

AMERICA, AS AMERICANS SEE IT, EDITED BY FRED J. RINGEL. *Harcourt.* $3.75.

As the Duke of Wellington said of the latest terrible batch of recruits sent him in the draft, I don't know what effect this book will have on the enemy but it should certainly scare the wits out of any American. We can't be that bad and yet the individual facts are all there. That is the trouble with symposiums and it will not be helped by deporting Mr. Ringel to Germany along with the first box of books. Despite the unevenness of the contributions, he has done a fine job of editing. The two best chapters are by Holger Cahill on art and Gilbert Seldes on American humor, the latter a profound analysis of our jocular natures. Many of the chapters were obviously tossed off by the authors before breakfast, but the general scheme is carried out well. It has been mentioned, and more than a bit invidiously, that the illustrations (reproductions of modern paintings and photographs) are superb and they are. Mr. Benchley has said some acute things about the Press that Mr. Stanley Walker of *The New York Herald Tribune* has not liked and I don't blame him; they sound all too true. Mr. Sherwood has an excellent piece on Hollywood. There are articles on all phases of our life and it is interesting stuff if you don't try to gulp it at one sitting. Not great but interesting—and too devastating to be funny. Stephen Leacock writes on Americans and this adds to the pain, for Mr. Leacock is a trifle silly. He says, "Americans hire comedians and watch them laugh." Not laugh at them, but watch *them* laugh. If this is Canadian acuteness perhaps Mr. Ringel should take a trip North. Canada should also have a book.

MEN AND MACHINES IN RUSSIA, BY LOUIS FISCHER. *Harrison Smith.* $2.50.
SOCIALIST PLANNED ECONOMY IN SOVIET RUSSIA, BY V. OSSINSKY. *International.* $1.50.

Mr. Fischer makes you believe in Soviet success by his frankness in admitting the mistakes. He criticises Stalin for seeking the spotlight which Lenin avoided, but he gives a picture of Russia bounding along at a great rate while the rest of the world stands stalled. He is forthright about the plight of established Russian authors but enthusiastic about the cultural upsurge of the masses. His book was doubtless in press before the recent vigorous decision of the authorities to eliminate persecution of writers just as was done with engineers and other intellectuals earlier in the year. His book is not the last word on Russia but it is a very readable account of the social stirrings—stirrings, nothing; earthquakes!—going on there.

For those who want to know how and why Russia plans, Mr. Ossinsky's little volume is the book.

I COVER THE WATER FRONT, BY MAX MILLER. *Dutton.* $2.50.

Mr. John McCrae, the publisher, practically dared the critics and public to like this book, and the critics have responded valiantly. "You infer that we won't get the subtlety of this book. We'll show you; it's a great book." Coming along late like this, we could slay them, but the trouble is, it *is* a fine book. Max Miller, as the Americans would say, is a swell guy. He has a sort of humbleness like Chaplin that really isn't humbleness at all, and the book is as slyly humorous as anything. He's a reporter for a San Diego paper, covering the water front, and he tells of the people he meets and of his own lofty and foolish ambitions. You have to go easy on mentioning charm, but this thing has charm.

KYLE S. CRICHTON.

THE CRISIS OF CAPITALISM IN AMERICA, BY M. J. BONN. *John Day.* $2.50.

Those rare persons whose minds' eyes are able to discern the simple enough outline of the wood in which American economics are at present groping will find in Doctor Bonn's stodgily careful study of the various trees many details with which to fill in the picture and confirm the accuracy of their survey. But any one who, by reversing the process, hopes to obtain a panoramic view of the economic jungle through a study of its flora will find the visibility poor. The method, being a favorite one with American economists, will probably excite their admiration, although the German professor primarily addresses himself to simple Michael with a view to explaining America to him. His figures, his "facts," his perfectly scientific analysis of them, will delight the American reader, who will have the satisfaction of rising from the perusal with the illusion of expert knowledge and with any opinions he may choose to hold.

From the professor's survey we may gather that the wealth of America in the period of prosperity was speculative wealth, that is, gamblers' gains. Incidentally, we come upon the casual remark that, "The whole of the money engaged in speculation will, as it were, be withdrawn from consumption." Or, as the above-mentioned rare persons might translate it, the whole of the speculative wealth of prosperity was, "as it were," stolen from the resources of the people of America, and from their pockets.

(Continued on page 5)

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—*Saturday Review of Literature*

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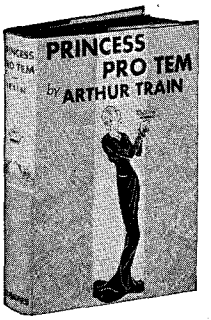
Princess Pro Tem

by Arthur Train



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Doctor Bonn indicates in his guarded technical phraseology that the conditions which made such gambling possible—expansion of home and foreign markets, exploitation of resources, etc.—are now exhausted, and that any resumption of the process, that is, another turn at the roulette, is now no longer possible. American capitalism, he points out, does not now enjoy any advantage over capitalism anywhere else.

Speaking of the methods by which the disastrous results of speculation may be remedied, the professor informs us that, when scientifically analyzed, they resolve themselves into effecting a "different distribution of losses." Like a good German, he concludes by exhorting Americans to let off poor Michael, and to tear up I. O. U's.

It cannot be said that the German professor's contribution to the already unwieldy literature on the bursting of the bubble of American prosperity is outstanding, and one cannot agree with Professor Laski's pronouncement that it is the wisest book published on the subject. If it were, such a handicap would probably be seriously detrimental to its circulation.

ROBERT BRIFFAULT.

YEAR BEFORE LAST, BY KAY BOYLE. *Harrison Smith.* $2.50.

Miss Boyle remains, with this novel, one of our most consistently sensitive writers. It did not need "Year Before Last" to definitely establish her claim to distinction, for her work in the left-wing magazines has for several years borne indisputable witness to that fact. In this second published novel she extends the range of her talents and achieves a satisfying and moving piece of fiction.

Set against a background of Southern France, she has brought to life a trio of characters that will remain long in the reader's memory. Here is a triangle with a difference. In the persons of Martin Sheehan, Hannah and Martin's mad Irish aunt, Eve Raeburn, she has created a situation rich with the vital conflict of human emotions and aspirations.

Miss Boyle is less successful with her male protagonists than with her women. Of the three principal characters, the women alone are seen from the inside—Martin remains a well-wrought piece of external observation: almost invariably, the only information we have about him is from a literal reporting of his speech and actions. The author will remedy this defect in her future work, as well as a tendency to exaggerated imagery. Yet even now she stands head and shoulders above those of her fellow-craftswomen who have received the uncritical approbation of the public.

ALVAH C. BESSIE.

BEWARE OF IMITATIONS, by A. E. Brown and H. A. Tefcott (*Viking*) $2. A book of amazing inventions compiled from the records of the United States Patent Office by the indefatigable authors. The "tape worm trap" is perhaps the gem of the collection.

THE MAN FROM SCOTLAND YARD, by David Frome (*Farrar and Rinehart*) $2. Inspector Bull solves this mystifying triple crime. (We name these sleuths because they ear-mark the stories for detective-novel fans.) There is a lot of very clever deduction, plenty of action, and strangely enough, a neat romance.

THEY CAME TO THE CASTLE, by Anthony Bertram (*E. P. Dutton and Co.*) $2.50. Thoroughly enjoyable novel of a group of "paying guests" at an Austrian castle. They represent all sorts—good, bad, and insufferable. Scandal invades the ancient keep, gossip steals along its mighty halls, the guests finally leave—and a rich Jew (the one decent character in the group) achieves princely heights by a gesture. It's a good book.

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VOLUME IX of the Dictionary of American Biography (just published) carries this alphabetical record of eminent Americans well into the letter "J." Indicative of the wide scope of this biographical work, which is re-creating the whole pageant of the making of America through chronicling the lives of some 14,000 individual lives which have influenced the American scene in various ways, are the following, selected from this new volume, which is representative:

• Railroad Builder

James J. Hill, whose career covered the most important chapters in the history of railroading.

• Littérateur

Oliver Wendell Holmes, whose work as poet, essayist, and teacher is reviewed in such a way as to be a critique as well as a biography.

• Artist

Winslow Homer, whose paintings were of the highest order and established a new tradition in American art.

• Clergyman

Thomas Hooker, who led the exodus of his parishioners from Massachusetts to the newly founded Connecticut colony.

• Naval Officer

Esek Hopkins, Commander-in-Chief of the Continental navy during the Revolutionary War.

• Soldier

Samuel Houston, whose career in the building of Texas forms one of the brightest pages in the history of the West.

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American humanity seems to me very gifted. I do not mean this chauvinistically. All I mean is that the selective mongrelism which has been our long good fortune, under the sharpening conditions of a pioneer culture, has produced a very capable human type; by and large. And yet, we justly hear on all sides, that in these days of deep social anxiety we lack even the least social leadership.

There must be a reason. And the reason is of course social. We have done extraordinarily well in merely industrial efficiency. We have shown genius in the exact sciences. We have shown talent, for that is all it can be, in the gentle follies of Chaplin films, tap dancing, comic strips. In many more serious respects we are ahead of the old world, so full of hostages to tradition. But in our social organization, especially since the war, we have been foolish, cruel, and short. We have allowed social control to drift almost entirely into the hands of big business. And big business is unfit to function as the censor and guide of any great society. It intrinsically fears intelligent criticism. It does not permit the socially able to rise to the top; latterly even within its own field. Our big business has become a private bureaucracy with vast public power. And like all bureaucracies since the beginning of time it frowns on real gifts and true values. Our popular notion is that politics is no place for an outstanding man. But, popular notions to the contrary, big business offers him even less of chance. This is the day of the epigones in big business, the banal and smug and conventional successors to the really great men, such as the elder Rockefeller and the elder Morgan and Harriman, who laid the foundations of this economic empire. That is why no one with a scintilla of brains ever believes in the "success" story. We know that outer success in business is apt to cover inner emptiness.

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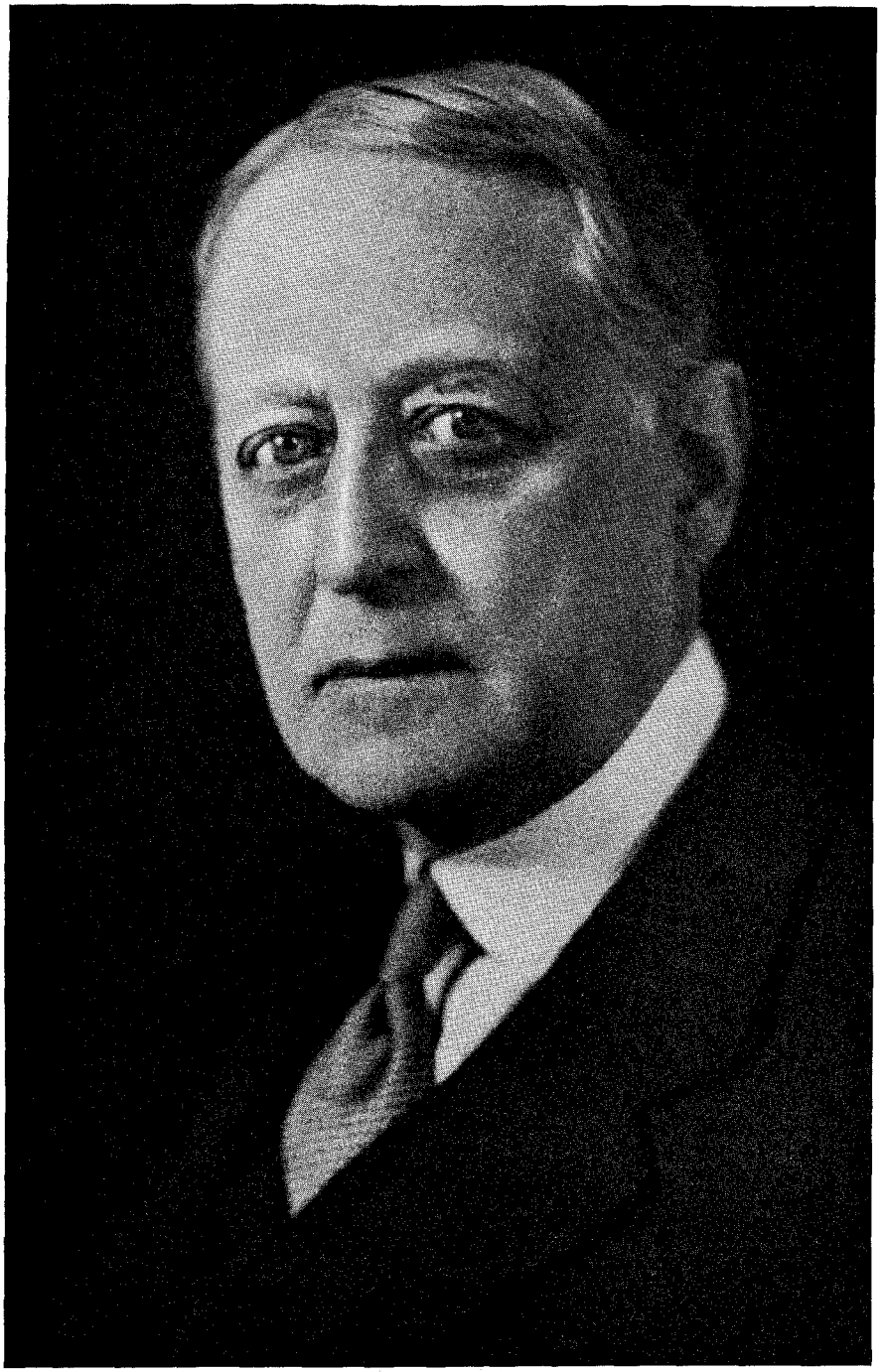

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SCRIBNER'S MAGAZINE

VOL. XCII, NO. 2 AUGUST, 1932

A SCRIBNER PRIZE STORY

The Big Short Trip

By John Herrmann

ONE OF THE TWO WINNERS IN THE SCRIBNER'S MAGAZINE $5000 PRIZE SHORT NOVEL CONTEST

Complete in this number

When the taxi stopped in the Pennsylvania Station Sam MacHenry's hand went to the door latch and with a sure hold he opened the door and his pointing finger raised slightly and automatically to a waiting Redcap who jumped grinning and took the gladstone bag and heavy smooth brown-leather sample case.

Sam gave a quick sharp look at the Redcap and at the sample case which was insured for twenty thousand dollars, because many of the modern wrist-watch cases were heavily studded with diamonds. He paid the cab driver and fumbled with the change a moment. It was his last trip so he slipped the driver a quarter instead of the usual ten cents.

His secretary had reserved a lower and ticket to Buffalo, the first stop on this trip. He had the porter put the sample case at the foot of the berth lengthwise against the side of the car. The gladstone bag went on the raised seat-back at the foot and the Redcap grinned and thanked him for a quarter tip.

There was still twenty minutes before the train pulled out. Nearly all of the lowers were filled and there were snores from two which sounded particularly loud and made Sam feel slightly uncomfortable.

The porter whispered, "Buffalo seven fifty, call you at seven, sir?"

"Seven fifteen," Mr. MacHenry said with a husky whisper.

"Yes, sir; yes, sir; seven fifteen is right."

Samuel MacHenry walked down the aisle to the men's room drawing a cigar from his breast pocket, rolling it in his right hand and inspecting it very carefully. He tore the band off and mechanically rolled it into a little ball and dropped it under the water cooler. In the men's room a salesman was sitting quietly smoking his last cigar for the day. He brightened up a little as Mr. Samuel MacHenry, salesmanager of the Marvin Watch Company, walked in.

"A pretty cool day for so late in the spring," Sam said.

"Downright cold, I'd call it," the man said.

Sam sat down and took out his lighter. He raised

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his head about to make a remark about lighters but decided against it. He lit his cigar carefully, put the lighter back, and inspected the burning end of the cigar. He had a good light.

"I always like a cigar before I turn in," he said.

"Me too, I never cared for cigarettes."

"Well, I smoke cigarettes," Sam said. "But for satisfaction give me a cigar."

"I might just as well not smoke as to smoke a cigarette," the man said.

Sam said he could understand and the conversation went on for a while about smoking and then to the unusual weather they had been having. Sam brought up the fact that Hoover had gone fishing, but they didn't get on to politics or the business depression.

When Sam's cigar was about one-third smoked he thought of his sample case and felt a little uneasy. The train started moving.

With an almost tender look at his cigar Sam let it fall plop into the spittoon. He had to watch his smoking. He got up from his seat slowly helped by his left hand. He decided to let his teeth go until morning but washed his hands and rubbed cold water over his face and then shook out the towel with his right and wiped his face and hands and then carefully the wash bowl. He automatically dropped the towel into the used towel rack beneath, and raising up felt tired and found it easier not entirely to straighten up his shoulders.

The other salesman was still fondling his last cigar for the day, looking moodily at the ash on its end.

"Well, good night," said Sam, "I guess I'll turn in."

"Going right away myself."

Samuel MacHenry walked slowly through the still slow-moving train, shoulders still bent down a little and thinking: now I won't be doing this again.

The sample case was there and waiting, lying on the berth. Sam sat down and began his undressing. When he reached his underwear he slid back further into the berth and pulled the curtains to, fumbled in his bag for pajamas and a copy of *Heart Throbs* he carried with him. He folded his trousers and carefully hung them over the hammock so they would not lose their press. He read a couple of pages, felt the inside pocket of his vest where he had his money, then snapped out the light and lay back flat, thinking. He was counting up his assets.

Sam felt a slight possibly exultant feeling as he lay back thinking. There was the hope for good business on this last trip which was not justified by conditions, but more, there was in him a feeling that when the trip was over he would cut himself loose from his sister Anna MacHenry, for whom from his youth he had been made to feel responsible.

The regular clunkety-clunk-clunk, clinkety-clink-clink, the slight swaying, the steady rhythmic jiggle, slowly without Sam's knowing it brought sleep and Sam's heart beat more slowly and steadily and he slept the hypnotic sleep of those accustomed to Pullman travel.

Sam was awake with wide-open eyes when George stuck his left hand through the curtain, grabbed the mattress and shook it.

"Seven fifteen, sir, diner second car to the rear, sir."

"All right," Sam said and turning over stretched out again, closed his eyes, and dozed on for a few minutes. Next to him the porter started taking down the berth, there was no use trying to get more rest. Sam got dressed to the shirt and went into the wash room with his gladstone.

His fellow smoker of the night before had finished shaving and stood adjusting his necktie. Sam said good morning and the man replied.

"I hate to get in so early but there's no use trying to get sleep. I'll have to wait around until nine before I can see anybody."

"It's the same with me," Sam said. "I'll just go around to the Statler and have breakfast and read the paper."

"We'll get a cab together, how about it?"

"Fine," Sam said.

In the cab Sam said, "What's your line?"

"Belts." He reached his hand to his waist. "This kind and also some other leather goods, pocket books. A fine line. An excellent line. The Neatfit line."

"Sure, I know them. Say, by the way." Sam's hand went to his belt, he turned it over and looked under the buckle. "I'm damned if that isn't the belt I'm wearing."

"You couldn't have a better. Let's see." He saw. "That's a good number, it's a good strong number, I mean I do well with that number."

"Without exaggeration I would be willing to say that I have probably worn that belt all of eight, nine, let's see, yes, all of nine, maybe ten years. Nineteen thirty-one, twenty-five, that was when I,"

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his voice trailed off into silence. "No, only seven because the boy was in high school. Yes, sir, that was a Christmas present from my son. Yes, seven years ago. He finishes college this year. Just a few weeks. He and I are great pals."

"Your boy had good judgment buying you a Neatfit."

"He's a fine young man. When he finishes college I'm going to give him a trip around the world, London, Paris. Give him some deep-sea fishing in Florida, some big-game hunting up in Canada. We're just going to take a couple of years together, us two, before he settles down. I think it will be very good for him."

"That'll give you a nice vacation, two years."

"I'm retiring, this is my last trip out."

"What's the line?"

"Marvin watches, wrist watches mainly," Sam said.

"Sure; I guess everybody knows your line. You put a lot into advertising. I see two-page spreads in *The Post* right along."

"We've cut that appropriation. But it's true, we've got the finest line of watches in the world without exaggerating."

"I carry an Elgin."

"Well, of course, we have only wrist watches and a few pendant models, small ones, you know, the same as the wrist models. I'm salesmanager. Of course I have an interest in the firm too. I've been with jewelry for thirty-five years, would you believe it?"

"Well I got you beat, I been in leather longer than that because I was born in the business."

"Ha, ha," ha, ha'd Sam. "That's a good one."

"My father was born in the business before me. Three generations of us."

Sam's father had been a good steady print-shop worker. He didn't say anything about it.

They got out at the hotel. Sam paid the cab and gave a ten-cent tip. The belt man paid half of the fare but forgot his half of the tip. Sam said, "Oh, never mind, it isn't anything," at the same time holding his hand out to receive the change. The belt man turned away.

Sam gave his bags to a boy to be checked. The belt man signed the register card.

They were bowed to a table in the main dining room. Both of them ordered the seventy-five-cent special. Sam ordered orange juice, bacon, and one fried egg, whole-wheat toast and milk. He had to watch his eating.

"I couldn't get along without coffee in the morning," Mr. Dent said.

"I used to be that way too, only my doctor, he's a good man, he's a Park Avenue doctor, he told me to go easy on coffee and liquor. Stimulants. It's funny, but I don't miss it any more. You'd be surprised, I don't seem to miss it."

Each of them was brought an eye opener, a small demi-tasse of black coffee, a Statler courtesy cup. Mr. Dent swallowed his as fast as he could. Sam looked longingly at his but refrained.

The head waiter importantly, with two morning papers under his arm, bowed, laid a paper down at each man's left.

Mr. Dent grabbed his, opened it, and concentrated. Sam fingered his, turned it over.

The headline hit Sam. "There's an awful lot of talk about those Russians," he mumbled. Mr. Dent was engrossed in a six-point drop in U. S. Steel. He didn't hear Sam.

"By fall things'll pick up," emphatically said Dent. "Fundamentally the country is sound."

"Sure," Sam said. "Only my boy was telling me it was apt to last longer than that. He's a great student, my boy."

"Impossible."

"I guess perhaps you're right," Sam said.

"I know I'm right."

"Yes, well, it's been pretty bad in our business."

"Our business was hit worse than any other, I believe."

"I guess our business was hit about as bad as any other," Sam said.

The food came and the discussion of economics ended. After eating they went out into the lobby. Mr. Dent turned to Sam.

"My name's Dent, I'm glad I met you."

"Mine's MacHenry."

They shook.

"I'll see you again some place," Sam said.

"Sure, you bet, some place along the line. Where are you going this trip?"

"I'm just calling on the big accounts. I make a circle. Detroit, Chicago, Minneapolis, Kansas City, St. Louis, you know, Pittsburgh, and then back. Of course, that's not all the places but I only call on the big accounts, we've got other men in the terri-

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tory. My trip's the big trip, I mean most of the best business. Only it doesn't take me long, four or five weeks, about. I'm in New York most of the time."

Sam pulled a card from his leather card case. "I'd like to see you some time."

Mr. Dent reciprocated. His card said president. He felt good about that card. "I just call on jobbers mainly," he said.

Sam looked at Dent's card. Belts didn't carry the weight of watches with Sam.

They shook again. It was nine o'clock. Sam got his sample case and started out. The case was heavy but he was going to walk the three blocks to his first customer's store. The heavy case pulled on his arm and he switched it from one hand to the other. He usually took taxis and this morning when he was still a block from Flederman's he had to set the case down for a minute. He didn't feel as young as he thought he ought to. When he once got out into the open, fishing, hunting, travelling on the oceans, then the old pep would come back. The steady grind of work and the hard pushing it took to put the line over in a day of poor business took it out of a man.

He walked slowly the remaining distance to the store. He hoped Hal Flederman would be through reading his morning mail. Sam turned into Flederman's Jewelry Store. He felt good. He could depend on Hal Flederman giving him a fairly good order and he wanted to see how Hal would take the news that this was his last trip on the road.

He nodded to the elderly watchmaker who was hanging repaired watches on the board in front of the store. Everybody knew Sam because he had been on the road for better than twenty years.

"Mr. Flederman's in the office, Mr. MacHenry," the watchmaker said.

"I'll walk right back," Sam said.

He opened the office door a crack and stuck in his head. "Hello, Hal, how's the boy?"

"Fine and dandy. I got your card, you said you were getting here tomorrow."

"Little mistake in the office, Hal."

Sam edged into the office with the heavy sample case and Hal pretended to be studying the morning mail but jerked his head a little toward the vacant chair beside his desk. Sam sat down with his legs apart and the sample case between them. He slipped his hat on top of the desk at the back.

Mr. Flederman made a gesture of putting the mail at the back of the desk, then leaned back in his chair with his hands behind his head.

"How's watches?" he said.

"Not so bad, Hal, how goes it with you?"

"Rotten, I'm not buying a thing, not a thing."

"Hey, listen a minute, Hal, don't be that way. I'm not here trying to take your money away from you. I just want to show you a couple of new watches. We're five years ahead of our toughest competition."

"Ha, ha, the old bull, Sam, you'll never get over it."

"I'm over it, Hal, this is my last time out on the road, so help me. And I'm breaking clean. I'm retiring. I'm going to have a little fun, by God I am."

"Naw, you don't mean it, Sam. You ain't kidding me, are you? When did you first come around here?"

"Nineteen eight."

"My father was here then. I came in in eighteen."

"I remember, your father bought a lot of goods from me."

"Sure, your line's all right."

"All right? Why there isn't a better."

"Your prices are pretty high, Sam."

"High hell, goods for goods I can give you better value than you can find in the country and you know it."

"Well maybe, but what about this kicking over the traces business? What's the idea? Have you got too much dough in the bank?"

"I'll tell you, Hal. You know I'm just turning fifty and I been working steady since I was a kid. I saved up a little but it's been a steady grind. I figure I owe it to myself. I'll get in a lot of good fishing and hunting and travel around a little. Go abroad, see Paris, you know. Sort of begin to get some fun out of life."

"I wish to hell I could do it. I'm tied down."

"Sell out."

"A man can't do that. I mean I couldn't now the way things are. And I've got a family," Hal said.

"Well, of course, that's true. I'm pretty much alone. The boy gets out of college and I've only got my sister left. Sure I know it's different."

Sam leaned down over his case and carefully unfastened the two locks. He laid the case flat on the floor and raised the hinged cover. The case was lined with deep purple velvet and the top tray was filled with platinum wrist watches, most of them

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heavily set with diamonds. They glistened against the velvet.

Sam picked out one of them, a new number. "This, Hal, is the Lady Exquisite. See, curved back, slim oval face. There's half a karat of genuine-cut diamonds in that case and it's new. There where the strap fastens under the ends, those are genuine rubies, not reconstructed, but genuine. What do you think of that?"

"I haven't got three customers could afford that watch," Flederman said. "Not the way times are."

"What do you think it costs?"

"I don't know. How many jewels is it?"

"Fifteen, our own movement of course."

"What does it cost, Sam?"

"Well, I'll bet you thought it cost over three hundred, now didn't you? Well, it don't. It sells for two twenty-five with the usual forty off to you. Ask me how we do it."

"Well, go on."

"Well, I'll tell you, Hal, you can't equal that value anywhere. That's a special. We made up ten thousand of those cases at a shot and we're going after it big. Next month we've got two full pages in *The Post* featuring that little number. Just in time for the June brides, eh? It'll go, like hot cakes, because there isn't a more elegant-looking style on the market and I doubt if you could produce a watch with more real intrinsic value built into it than that one. It's the same movement that's in this fifteen hundred model. I'll bet you'll sell a hundred. That'll go big for graduation gifts."

"Hold on, Sam, not so fast. We don't do much for graduation, it's mostly Christmas business with us. I'll take two of them."

"No, I won't even bother to write up the order for only two, Hal. It wouldn't pay me and it certainly wouldn't pay you. You'll need ten before the month is out. Better start off with a dozen."

"Say, listen, Sam, that's what I don't like about you. If I took your word for it I wouldn't have anything in the store but Marvin watches. Give me five, not another one."

"All right, Hal, five it is, only take my word, in two weeks you'll have to re-order."

"I hope I do," Hal said.

Sam went through his line. Flederman walked out once to see how his stock in certain models was holding out. He came back.

"Damn it all, Sam, I shouldn't be ordering a thing. How many have I ordered?"

Sam quickly looked. There were about fifteen items.

"Only seven or eight, nothing at all, Hal. Hell, you haven't begun to order anything yet. Listen here, it's that over-cautiousness you fellows have got that's hurting business. If you've got the stuff you'll sell it."

"Business isn't picking up a bit, Sam, not a bit. I ran behind the first three months. I cut my own salary in half. I've only got three clerks and a watchmaker and I had to cut them. I tell you it's bad."

"Now, Hal, listen here. There's too much of that kind of talk. You say it's bad, don't you? I agree with you. It's very bad. It's so bad in fact, Hal, that you've got to admit it's hit the bottom. It can't be any worse. So it's got to get better. When you get to the bottom you can't go any lower and that's right where we are now."

"It could get worse."

"Say, Hal, I want to tell you something. I was talking to a man just this morning. A man who is up on the situation and in a position to know, and what do you think he told me? Well, here is the dope, and this man is in a position to know. He says that without doubt, mark that, without any doubt whatsoever, by fall things will be on their way back to prosperity and good times. I put faith in that man because that's exactly what I believe and everything bears me out in it."

"I hope so, but I've heard that before. Well, ror God sakes, Sam, now show me some of the lower-priced stuff. That's all we can sell. I'll never move those fancy numbers."

Sam didn't let himself be hurried but systematically went through the line. Flederman was nervous, he knew he was ordering more than he should, but it was Sam's last trip. He wanted to give him a good order but he worried.

"Sam, I want ninety days on this order."

"Sixty, Hal, that's all I'm allowed to give and you couldn't get that if you weren't an old customer. Thirty days net is the way we are running the business now. You're lucky to get sixty and I'll have to make a special effort to arrange even that. You'd be surprised how many people we just refuse to sell to except for cash."

"All right, all right, only how in hell are you fellows going to make money if you run us retailers out of business? It's to your interest to keep us going, you ought to co-operate more."

Continued on page 113

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The Cities Reap the Whirlwind

By Walter W. Liggett

The city dweller finds his pocket-book emptier and taxes higher. In many cities he sees the power in the hands of dominant political machines, to whose advantage are the many duplicating functions of city and county governments, leading to extravagance, the selling of favors, corruption of all sorts. Mr. Liggett goes to the root of the evil of city government, shows how it started, and who supports it.

ONCE more the shame of the cities is a front-page feature. The rapid tumble of prices and wages since 1929 has left the extravagances of government—city governments in particular—looming up like a Himalayan peak, and the increasing drain on the deflated pocketbook of Mr. City Dweller is causing him to complain vociferously about the cost of conducting his municipality and to wonder whether he is getting his money's worth.

Now that the Federal budget has reached a semblance of balance—without much really being done in the way of economy—it seems inevitable that the spotlight of public interest will be turned upon the city and state governments. It is costing approximately eight billion dollars annually to carry on the city governments of the United States and the burden upon industry and the small home owner has become so crushing that there is a general demand for drastic retrenchment. The Seabury investigation, with Mayor Walker as a star performer, probably is only a prologue which will be followed by several more acts in many widely scattered parts of the country.

But, while business men rail at the politicians, most of them fail to connect the fact that there is graft in government with the equally well-established fact that it is business which causes most of the civic corruption by its willingness to pay the politicians for favors. Vice, from time immemorial, always has yielded handsome sums for "protection," and prohibition has enormously increased the tribute taken from the underworld, but the growth of our cities and the development of industry have opened newer and infinitely more profitable fields for exploitation.

It is impossible to avoid the conclusion that in most of our larger industrial centres—and in many smaller cities, too—the corruption of municipal government originally has been brought about by the purchasers of special privilege—and public utility interests have been the worst offenders.

Yet it is not possible to make a blanket indictment. Instances are not unknown where city councils or mayors have blocked perfectly legitimate undertakings until they got their price. Sometimes harmful legislation was deliberately introduced, thus virtually compelling interested business men to pay to have it killed. Any one who knows the American politicians realizes that many of them will cheerfully go half way to meet a prospective briber. Nevertheless, in those cities where government is notoriously corrupt, it generally will be found that the traction, light, gas, power, and telephone companies either are, or have been, the keystone of the arch of civic dishonesty.

They have their allies, of course. Bankers, who hold utility stocks, underwrite municipal securities, or profit by interest-free public funds placed in their depositories; realtors, who draw down fat commissions as the result of advance tips that permit them to tie up property needed for school sites, parks, and other public improvements; contractors who get sewer or paving jobs at their own price; favored bondsmen and insurance agents; "tax adjusters" who split rebates with city officials; and a swarm of "fixers" of high and low degree—these are the elements which make up the powerful rings of "insiders" in control of our larger cities.

The bankers and public-utility magnates who provide campaign funds for our municipal machines often are men of impeccable private morals.

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Some are noted for their benefactions; others are patrons of the arts. Nonetheless, their influence tends toward social disintegration. However fastidious these men may be personally, they cannot absolve themselves of responsibility by winking at the tactics of their henchmen—or by feigning ignorance of the ultimate consequences.

Whenever business men as a class demand businesslike methods of municipal administration they usually can bring this about, but, unfortunately, in far too many instances the business element vaguely fear candidates who have a record of fair and honest law enforcement and prefer men who will wink at law violations—and grant special favors. Consequently, in the great majority of cases, we entrust our city affairs to glib, glad-handing professional politicians who are either crooked or incompetent—and frequently both. It seems to arouse no particular indignation when they are shown to have been looting the people. On the contrary, we have built up a popular psychology where graft is looked upon as a perquisite of public office and the word "reformer" has come to be a term of opprobrium.

Complexity Makes for "Buck Passing"

The incredible complexity of most municipal governments would effectually forbid businesslike methods even if they were honestly conducted by capable business men. The arbitrary separation of legislative and administrative functions divides responsibility and inevitably leads to "buck passing"—the favorite indoor sport of all professional politicians. City and county governments overlap. Often there are other duplicating—and sometimes conflicting—independent boards. Within Cook County, Illinois, which includes Chicago, there are no less than 450 independent governing bodies, each with the power to levy taxes. There are 83 separate boards in Greater New York.

No citizen, however intelligent, can post himself on these multifarious governmental activities, and neither can he possibly inform himself as to the merits of the small army of candidates who periodically present themselves for public office. It is not to be wondered at that it requires $350,000,000 annually to conduct the joint affairs of Chicago and Cook County—and neither should it occasion surprise to learn that a very large proportion of this total is wasted or stolen outright.

New York, with its five borough governments super-imposed upon five different county governments, is another example of the enormous waste caused by unnecessary duplication. Its expenses are $631,366,297.97, more than one-seventh of the Federal budget. Philadelphia, too, retains the archaic system of dual city and county government. Professional politicians always resist either simplification or reform. Consequently, less than one dozen communities in the whole United States have combined the functions of their city and county governments, although the existing duality puts a wholly unnecessary burden upon the tax payers.

In smaller cities, where there is racial unity among the citizens, most of whom are home-owners, public affairs are rightfully considered the concern of the individual and government often is carried on with a fair degree of efficiency. No such enlightened self-interest exists among the polyglot populations of our metropolitan areas. The sheer size of these cities tends to crush out a sense of individuality, and it is almost impossible for dissenters to get together for collective expression of their views. A majority of the residents of New York or Chicago are renters and hardly think of these cities as permanent homes. In far too many cases they look upon municipal problems almost as impersonally as do transients. Then, too, a large and constantly increasing proportion of the more intelligent business and professional men are commuters. They reside outside the cities, often in different States. Their civic interest usually is confined to the place where they pay personal taxes.

Decently efficient municipal government is discouragingly hard to achieve even under the best of conditions, but in America it has been made vastly more difficult, because, during the formative period of their greatest growth, the population of practically all of our cities had a disproportionately high percentage of immigrants. Instead of being readily assimilated, they flocked together in what became essentially foreign settlements. Millions of these aliens were wholly unacquainted with constitutional self-government and looked upon America merely as an economic grab-bag. Unfortunately, their tutelage was left to ward heelers with the lowest possible ideals. Granted the ballot—which many of them valued only as a salable commodity—it was inevitable that shrewd party bosses should organize them into deliverable *blocs* to be bargained for at so much per vote.

We cannot, however, justly make the foreign-born voters—or their descendants—the scapegoats

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for all our civic sins. The "boss system" seems indigenous to our soil. After all, it was usually native Americans who perfected the political machines which have ruled most of our larger municipalities —and American-born public-utility financiers in most instances have put up the campaign funds that perpetuated this corrupt control. Furthermore, Milwaukee and Cincinnati, both predominantly German, are among the best governed cities of the United States; while in New York, whose history for 130 years is almost enough to make one despair of democracy, Tammany Hall, which had an original membership of 100 per cent Americans, was functioning long before the successive waves of foreign immigration.

Tammany, ironically enough, began as a benevolent society and it was Aaron Burr who first persuaded its leaders to participate in public affairs by supporting his presidential ambitions in 1800. Ever since 1834—when New York chose its first mayor by popular election—Tammany has retained its grip upon the city government with but a few interludes. From the days of the "Forty Thieves" and Fernando Wood, who preceded the more notorious Tweed, systematic spoliation has been its policy. So early as 1840 its revenue from protected vice alone was estimated at $600,000 a year and during the palmy days of the Tweed régime the annual "take" must have run into many millions.

Where the Real Dough Is

Today individual policemen doubtless continue to collect protection money, and the largest bootleggers are assessed for the right to monopolize certain "territory," but the "real big-dough graft," in the parlance of the underworld, comes from business men, big and little, who are perfectly willing to pay liberally for unfair advantages of one sort or another. The Queens sewer scandals are still a malodorous memory. Favored contractors fatten on most public improvements, and "insiders" nearly always profit by the purchase or sale of city property. This, with the bonding of public officials and the insuring of city structures, is looked upon as "honest graft." Transportation franchises, too, as the Seabury committee's recent exposures would at least strongly indicate, also pay handsomely to those who control their disposal.

Privileges are paid for in New York—whether it is a foreign steamship concern desirous of docking rights, or a pushcart peddler seeking a more favorable site by a curbstone. Immunities are paid for, too, and so are appointments. Judgeships have a scheduled sales value, and it may be assumed that in many cases justice itself is a marketable commodity. Even failure to abate the smoke nuisance has its price; and the inspections of buildings, markets, milk, restaurants, etc., all bring in a steady revenue. Of 1400 scales recently tested, more than 1000 were found to be short-weight. Could anything but bribery account for such blindness?

It is not unfair to assert that many departments of the city government are deliberately maladministered so as to bring in the largest possible amount of illicit revenues. Probably there is less downright thievery than in the days of Tweed, but the Seabury committee's revelations have made it unmistakably plain that it is not at all unusual for Tammany henchmen to amass sizable fortunes by methods which they cannot explain—and probably Mr. Seabury has only scratched the surface. It would be very difficult to estimate accurately how many millions of dollars a year the Tammany machine mulcts from the people of New York and how many millions more it wastes through sheer incapacity.

New York probably can claim the dubious distinction of having the world's worst municipal government—it certainly is the most expensive—and it also is an outstanding example of how a corrupt political machine eventually poisons the whole psychology of the community. Every one with intelligence enough to read knows that the government is corrupt, yet it seems impossible to arouse the slightest indignation among the majority of its voters. Loot accumulated in tin boxes and safety deposit vaults by venal officials comes, in the last analysis, from the people. Tammany for years has proved a pretty costly luxury, yet millionaire and subway digger alike seem amply compensated by an occasional wisecrack for the continually increasing expense and continually mounting bonded indebtedness.

Tammany has grown so powerful that it can dictate terms to privilege seekers instead of humbly truckling to the largest campaign contributors. This explains why, in the face of pressure from strong financial sources, Tammany office holders resist any increase in subway rates. They have so thoroughly capitalized most of the perquisites of public office that they can well afford to be independent on this

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question—and they also realize that in a city of subway riders the five-cent fare is a perennially popular political issue.

Chicago, though rivalling New York in the degree of its corruption, offers a sharp contrast in the methods by which it is controlled. For nearly forty years public utilities have dominated the mid-Western metropolis. Charles T. Yerkes purchased a majority of the city councilmen in 1897 as the first necessary step in his effort to amalgamate the surface traction lines under a long-term franchise. Today electric light, gas, and power companies as well as the bus and street-car lines are owned by the Insull interests. This combine has dictated local policies of Democrats as well as Republicans—and contributed liberally to the campaign funds of both parties.

The notorious Thompson-Small Republican machine always has been wholly subservient to the Insull interests. It is no secret that "Big Bill the Builder" was induced to make his successful comeback campaign in 1926 on promises of support from the utility interests, primarily because Dever—the best mayor Chicago has had in several decades—vetoed a long-term street-car franchise which he thought unfair to the city's interests. Thompson won largely because his campaign was liberally financed and his promises of a wide-open town attracted the solid support of the underworld.

Almost as soon as Thompson was installed in the City Hall, Al Capone and other gangsters—whom Dever had driven to Cicero, Burnham, and other outlying villages—returned to the Loop to cash in on their campaign promises. A saturnalia of crime was the consequence—but the Insull interests speedily got their desired franchise. Now, under a Democratic régime, Chicago's "Secret Six" are conducting a well press-agented "cleanup" as necessary advance work for the coming "Century of Progress" exposition. Capone and a few other gang chieftains have been jailed—significantly enough, by the Federal and not by the municipal authorities—but so far the apparent purpose has been to slap on a coat of whitewash instead of repairing the fundamental faults in the city's governmental structure.

Philadelphia, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, and Boston are other cities where the origin of political corruption can be traced back to the activities of public-utility interests in purchasing franchises. In San Francisco, after the earthquake and fire of 1906, the traction interests wanted franchises for overhead trolleys. Working through Abe Ruef, they purchased the mayor and a majority of the council at wholesale rates and precipitated a condition that almost approximated civil war. Dynamitings, intimidation of witnesses and jurors, the assassination of a prosecuting attorney in a court room, strikes, riots, and boycotts directed against too critical newspapers, were concomitants of a bitter feud that divided the city. The famous Mooney frame-up was a direct consequence of this bitter industrial war.

In Cleveland, for years, all political campaigns have centred around control of the public utilities. Seattle, also, had a long dispute with its public-utility interests, culminating in riots and a general strike, and it may not be without significance that its fight for good government was not won until the municipality purchased the street-car lines and established its own power and light plant, thus removing the chief source of civic corruption.

Detroit, likewise, has made extensive ventures in municipal operation of street cars, water, light, and power, and paves its own streets, but only after a long drawn fight with the former owners of private franchises.

The Underworld Comes In

Professional politicians who serve special interests invariably cater to the underworld and in return receive its support. Gangsters are the direct result of this corrupt alliance. Votes are the only consideration, and a leader who delivers his district seldom is questioned as to the methods he employs. Beer runners, speakeasy proprietors, bartenders, pool hall hangers-on, policy solicitors, pimps, prostitutes, gamblers, and gunmen all have votes—and are far readier to cast them than the average respectable citizen. They comprise a compact army that can be swung overnight to the support of any candidate the backroom bosses may designate. Intimidation and downright ballot theft are resorted to when necessary. In return for this invaluable aid the underworld gets "protection"—which simply means its members are given letters of marque to prey upon society.

Behind the gangsters are grafting policemen, greedy precinct captains, and even more grasping ward chairmen. Supporting them—and collecting their share of the split—are the bosses who depend upon the hoodlum element for votes. Above the bosses, doling out campaign funds and directing policies, are the seekers of exploitive public-utility

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franchises, millionaire tax dodgers, favored contractors, and a horde of lesser special privilege purchasers. Always bipartisan, playing one party against the other and controlling the bosses of both, they have brought about the breakdown of government in city after city and they are far more blamable than Capone and his ilk for the appalling increase in crime.

Difficulties in law enforcement have been multiplied by prohibition. Illicit traffic in liquor has opened many new channels of graft and spread venality, particularly among policemen and politicians. Nevertheless, it is superficial and silly to declare that prohibition is primarily responsible for increased crime. Racketeering has been a gradual development, and gangsters were not suddenly spawned by the Volstead Act. The causes of crime are rooted deep in our social system—nor will they be cured overnight by the legalizing of light wines or four per cent beer.

Ideals vs. Practice

There is an unescapable connection between corrupt government and increased crime. Slums create gangsters as surely as rotten meat breeds maggots. Some of our larger cities have square miles of congested tenement districts with hardly a playground. We cannot expect to inculcate decent ideals into boys who loaf about the streets because they are denied opportunities for healthy recreation.

Neither are jobless young men likely to be impressed by copybook maxims on thrift or morality when they have only to read the newspapers or look about them to see gangsters, police, and politicians who have become affluent either through breaking the law themselves or protecting those who do. Under such circumstances the average hard-working citizen can hardly be blamed for cynicism, nor is it to be wondered at that idle youths resort to racketeering. Unfortunately they have many examples in very high places.

Conversely, where you find good government you also will find a higher average decency among its individual citizens. Minneapolis, with the best system of public parks in the United States, has the usual quota of bootleggers, but is not troubled much by gangsters. Milwaukee, only eighty miles from Chicago, is comparatively free from the criminals and organized racketeers which infest the Illinois metropolis. "How did you get rid of gangsters?" the mayor, Daniel Webster Hoan, recently was asked.

"We have sixty-five playgrounds," he replied, "and they are administered by men and women trained to look after children and not by red-nosed politicians. Take the children off the streets and give them something to do. Keep the boys busy at work and you destroy the gang before it has a chance to get a foothold. Get the children, along with their parents, interested in politics. Milwaukee got rid of the gangsters because it has a police force that does not work in collaboration with the gangster boss. The gangster cannot exist anywhere on earth if he hasn't a pull with the politicians in control of the city's affairs."

Every experienced social worker realizes that one of the most effective ways to abate criminality is to provide playgrounds for children, though many other factors enter into the problem. As Mayor Hoan declares, it is political pull that permits the gangster to exist; and, as I have previously pointed out, he has this pull not only through "protection money" paid to the police, but because the bosses want his support on election day. Manifestly, it is necessary to eliminate the political machine before we can reach the gangster. Until that is done those who try to check crime by meting out savage sentences to erring individuals are merely paltering with surface effects instead of dealing with underlying causes.

Organized crime cannot remain static. It must either increase or diminish. Right now gangland is growing. "Alcohol routes" spread fan-wise from all our great cities, corrupting constables, policemen, sheriffs, Federal enforcement officers, and city officials all along the line of delivery. Gunmen in high-powered cars sally out to rob banks in country towns. Racketeers are constantly trying to "muscle in" on new territory. "Snatching," or kidnapping for a ransom, is a growing menace from which no wealthy person is immune.

There is a spiritual menace, too. Through the medium of the newspapers, the movies, and the cheaper magazines, gangster terminology and gangster ideals have insensibly infiltrated through our national consciousness. Every thoughtful person realizes the danger. Unless crime can be controlled in the centres from whence it came, like a cancerous growth it will infect the whole body politic—and that also applies to civic corruption.

Recently forty Illinois State legislators were

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found on the payroll of the Chicago Sanitary District. It was admitted they were paid solely to influence legislation. Tammany has a large delegation of spokesmen both at Albany and Washington. The Vare machine also is strongly represented at the national capital and has swung more than one senatorial primary. A few years ago belated and fraudulent returns from the "miracle wards" of Pittsburgh decided who was to be governor of Pennsylvania. More and more it is the support of the city bosses—who can deliver votes in solid *blocs*—that selects presidential nominees.

No government can rise above the character of the men who conduct it. Most of our State and national politicians are but the champions of the local arenas, where usually the hardest-boiled survive. That is why decent city management vitally concerns every citizen of the United States—and why national welfare demands certain fundamental reforms.

The obstacles sometimes seem disheartening, but nevertheless they are far from insuperable. London has shown that the affairs of a huge, cosmopolitan city *can* be capably conducted; and Berlin, with a population almost doubled since the war, has proved that rapid growth is not a sufficient excuse for dishonesty. Are the people of the United States any less competent? American efficiency in business and factory management is a model for the rest of the world. Once the imperative need is recognized, organizing genius should be able to solve our civic problems. Certainly there is encouragement in the fact that during the last three decades we *have* made distinct progress in municipal management.

Progress Has Been Made

Four hundred and thirty-six American communities—some of them fairly sizable and with a total population of 7,500,000—already have adopted the city management plan. Usually the change has resulted in marked improvement. Several large cities have found the commission form of government successful. Other communities have ousted corrupt political rings and introduced more businesslike methods.

Cincinnati in particular, formerly under "Boss" Cox, looked upon as about the worst-governed city in the United States, has made such rapid strides with its new nonpartisan commission and city manager that it has some reason to claim it is now the most efficiently conducted municipality. The improvement in Milwaukee already has been mentioned. Both Baltimore and Kansas City are fairly well governed. Notorious during the era when "Doc" Ames was its periodic mayor, Minneapolis has mended its ways and now is admirably governed in many respects. Seattle has progressed very far indeed since the shameful régime of "Hi" Gill; and St. Louis, too, can point to vast civic betterment in recent years. In both Cleveland and Detroit the decent element recently have won signal victories. San Francisco can show distinct progress. It is in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, and Pittsburgh that public morality probably is at its lowest ebb—but even in Pittsburgh there are rumblings of revolt and its mayor recently was convicted of grafting.

Yet municipal reforms will not be effected anywhere in America without a long and bitter struggle. Privilege is strongly entrenched and the professional politicians will resist every attempt to decrease their power. So long as they control the police and can promise protection they are sure of the solid support of the underworld. They also enter every campaign with the backing of a small army of office holders, their relatives and friends. Such an advantage is always difficult to overcome—and it is almost impossible when candidates for municipal office run on party tickets headed by popular State or national nominees. Under such circumstances local issues are certain to be obscured and men conspicuously lacking in fitness ride into positions of public trust solely by virtue of a Republican or Democratic emblem.

Sporadic revolts which "turn out the rascals" and replace them with "good men" seldom result in much permanent benefit. It is impossible to remove the personal equation from public life so long as demagogues can command a following, but conditions which have corrupted one set of office holders usually will corrupt their successors. Manifestly it is the conditions which need changing, the more so since most systems of municipal government seem especially designed to encourage extravagance and to facilitate fraud.

A science of government exists, though a majority of Americans seem never to have heard of it. Nevertheless it is no accident that almost without exception the communities in the United States which have achieved decent municipal administrations have as a first step first banned the long bal-

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lot where men run under Republican, Democratic, or Socialist Party designations, and compelled all candidates to be nominated by petition as nonpartisans on a short ballot. Almost automatically this method results in the selection of fairly prominent men, chosen on their merits, and it effectually prevents a horde of crooks or incompetents from sneaking into office under a party emblem.

The scrapping of the clumsy mayor-and-aldermanic system, with its divided authority and log rolling, naturally follows as the next step. Most cities which really desire to better their government have found it much more efficient to merge the legislative and executive powers in a commission of five, seven, or nine members; or to have a small nonpartisan council select and supervise the work of a competent city manager. Proportional representation, the initiative, the referendum, and the recall are time-tested and serviceable instruments of popular government which tend to make public servants responsive to the people—and which are resisted by professional politicians precisely for that reason.

Right now the prevailing political mood of America seems profoundly cynical—but popular moods can be changed by sustained propaganda. No one enjoys being swindled and the most careless citizen usually can be aroused when he is shown that the rascality of politicians is taking money from *his* pocketbook. That is a demonstration comparatively easy to make in most of our cities. And it is a demonstration that will be made, because some of the very forces that corrupted government now see the necessity for demanding economy—which is merely another name for municipal decency. It is accepted as a truism that communities get about as good government as they deserve, but in many instances government does not rest upon the consent of the governed so much as upon their ignorance of how badly they have been misgoverned.

Prospects for wide-spread improvement in city government are brighter than they have been for at least a quarter of a century. Taxes have become so onerous that bankers, business men, home-owners —in fact, about everybody except the professional politicians and the beneficiaries of graft—see the necessity for curtailment and are demanding drastic reductions in public expenses. Many persons, ordinarily indifferent to the obligations of good citizenship, have been spurred by mounting assessments into vigorous denunciations of corruption. Putting aside all questions of public morality, we may get honest and economical government for the simple but sufficient reason that industry and individual home-owners cannot continue to support dishonest extravagance.

FAR SOUTH

by H. Boner

Along the wide slope of the sunny hill
The old town of Hempstead sleeps and dies
In a dream of shadows among the oaks and vines
And meadows in golden light from summer skies.

This organism dies; in the nucleus alone
Some faint metabolism stirs and beats. . . .
A courthouse bears its tower of crumbling stone
Stiffly above the grass-plots that were streets;

And wagons and carriages wait before the stores
In the one live street, smudged from the railroad tracks;
Negroes seated at evening in tall soiled doors
Sense the emptiness of the wide rooms at their backs.

In the moonlight pillars and balustrades are white
As bleaching bone among the boughs and briars;
Sunlight breaks on them withering and gray
In the cold invisible smoke of unseen fires.

Troy blazed and vanished; many another town
In flame or flood went flickering like breath.
Before such subtler fire and flood this town goes down,
It goes, and stays, commemorating death.

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Sister Bernadette

A STORY

By Morley Callaghan

When Sister Bernadette, who had charge of the maternity ward in the hospital, wasn't rebuking a nurse in training for some petty fault, she was having a sharp disagreement with a doctor. She was a tall woman with a pale face that looked very handsome in her stiffly starched white headpiece. To her, the notion that her nun's habit might be protecting her from sharp retorts from the nurses was intolerable. But she simply couldn't hold a grudge against anybody, and if she had a tiff with a nurse she would wait till she saw the girl passing in the corridor and say innocently, "I hear you're offended with me," as she offered the warmest, jolliest smile. When young nurses in training, who were having a bit of idle gossip, saw the sister's tall, gaunt form, so formidable in the black robes, coming towards them, they often felt like a lot of half-guilty schoolgirls as they smiled good-naturedly. Of course Sister Bernadette had sympathy for all the women who were suffering and bearing children and she was like a mother to them, but it was the small things in the ward that were most important to her. If she saw a man in the corridor carrying a parcel carefully, she would watch him go into a patient's room, wait till he had departed, then rush into the room and look around to try and guess at once what might have been in the parcel. It was not hard for her to guess correctly, for she seemed to know every object in each private room. All the mothers liked her but were a bit afraid of her. Sometimes, forgetting that women were paying expensive doctors to look after them, she would give her own instructions and insist they be carried out completely, as if she knew more about the patients than the doctors did. There was a Doctor Mallory, a short dark fellow with a broad face, a shifting, far-away expression in his eyes, and a kind of warm, earthy tenderness in his manner, who often quarrelled bitterly with Sister Bernadette because she ordered a patient of his to take a medicine he had not recommended. He did not know that Sister Bernadette loved him for quarrelling openly with her instead of being just cuttingly polite because she was a nun.

One day Doctor Mallory, looking very worried, waited in the corridor, watching Sister Bernadette's tall form with the dark robes swinging around it, coming toward him. And when he looked into her face he couldn't help smiling, there was so much fresh, girlish contentment in her expression. But this time he spoke with a certain diffidence as he said, "Sister, I'd like to talk with you a minute."

"Please do, Doctor," she said. "You're not offended again, surely."

"Oh, no, not this time," he said, smiling warmly. "I wanted to tell you about a patient of mine I'd like to bring to the hospital to have her baby."

"Now don't tell me you're so afraid of me, you have to ask my permission to bring a patient here," she said, laughing.

"Not at all. Only this girl doesn't want to come. She's ashamed. She's of a good family. I know all about her. But she's not married and won't come here under her own name. I said I'd speak to you and you'd fix it up, Sister. Won't you?"

Sister Bernadette frowned. The doctor was smiling at her, as if he couldn't be fooled by a harsh refusal. It gave her pleasure to think that he was so sure of her sympathetic nature. But she said sharply, "It's against the rules to register anybody under a false name, you know that, Doctor."

"I know it, that's why I wanted to speak to you, Sister."

With ridiculous sternness Sister Bernadette said, "What do I care? Do what you want to do. Register the woman as Mrs. Macsorley, or anything else, it's all the same to me," and she turned and walked away as though greatly offended. The doctor, chuckling, watched her hurrying along the corridor without looking back once.

Sister Bernadette could hardly wait to see Doctor Mallory's new patient. Five minutes after the woman was brought to the hospital, Sister Bernadette was in the room looking at her with eager curiosity and speaking in a soft reassuring voice. The patient was only a girl with big scared blue eyes and fluffy blond hair whose confidence had been completely destroyed by her predicament. Sister Bernadette was desperately afraid that the young girl, who had been such a sinner and who was now suffering and disgraced, would be

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afraid of a woman like herself, a nun, who had given her life entirely to God. For some reason she wanted this scared girl to love her. That night, while the baby was being born, Sister Bernadette was in the corridor many times.

During the two weeks the girl remained at the hospital she was treated with a special attention by the nurses who thought she was an old friend of Sister Bernadette. No one suspected that Mrs. Macsorley wasn't married. Sister Bernadette got a good deal of pleasure realizing that she and the doctors were the only ones who shared the secret. Every morning she paid a visit to Mrs. Macsorley's room, talked about everything on earth, praised the baby, and tried to make the girl feel at home by strutting about like a blunt, good-natured farm woman. The fair-haired, blue-eyed girl, who was really a self-possessed, competent person, was so impressed by the sister's frank, good-natured simplicity, she sent word out to the baby's father that there was no reason why he shouldn't come to see her

When Sister Bernadette was introduced to the father, a well-dressed, soft-spoken, tall man, she shook hands warmly, called him Mr. Macsorley and showed the baby to him. His embarrassment disappeared at once. He felt so much at ease with Sister Bernadette during that first visit that he decided to come every day at noon time. At first Sister Bernadette was delighted by the whole affair; it seemed so much like the kind of thing that was always going on in her ward, making her world seem so rich with experience that she didn't care whether she ever went outside the hospital. But when she heard that the girl's lover was a married man, it bothered her to see that he was still so attentive. Though she honestly liked the man and liked the girl too, she said to Doctor Mallory with awkward sincerity, "I don't like to see that man coming to see the girl so much. Evidently they're still in love."

"Does he come often?"

"Every day. And they are both so sure of themselves."

"It isn't very nice. It isn't fair to you," the doctor said.

"No, no, I don't mean that," Sister Bernadette said. "But you know the man is married and has two children. I just mean that the girl at least ought to respect his wife and children and not let him be so devoted to her." Then Sister Bernadette began to feel self-conscious as though the doctor were misunderstanding her. "Don't misinterpret me," she said at once. "The girl can run around with single men as much as she likes and come here as often as she likes as far as I'm concerned. . . ."

"I'll tell them about it," the doctor said.

"No. Please don't. You'd better not say anything," she said.

Then it was time for Mrs. Macsorley to leave the hospital. Doctor Mallory came to Sister Bernadette and explained that he, himself, was going to find some one to adopt the baby. Coaxing and pleading, he asked if it wouldn't be all right to leave the baby in the hospital nursery for two days at the most.

Such a request didn't actually worry Sister Bernadette, but she snapped at the doctor, "It's absolutely against the rules of the hospital to leave a baby who's in good health in that nursery after the mother has gone." In the brief argument that followed she was short and hot-tempered, and in the end she said, "All right, have your way, but only for one day, mind."

She didn't think it necessary to worry till the baby had been left in the nursery for a week. Doctor Mallory was trying very hard to get some one to adopt the baby girl. Sister Bernadette began to think that the child would remain in her nursery till she, herself, did something about it. And every time she looked at the brown-eyed baby she was reminded that she had done wrong in letting the mother register at the hospital under another name. After all, it was just vanity, her eagerness to have the doctor believe her a good-natured person, that was now causing trouble. Perhaps she ought to reveal the whole matter to the Mother Superior, she thought. And in her prayers in the morning and in her evening prayers she asked that some one be found who would take the baby at once.

In the evenings, after ten o'clock feeding-time, she would go into the nursery when the lights were turned down looking at one small crib after another with an expert eye that made the nurse in charge wary. But she stood by Baby Macsorley's crib, frowning, puzzled by her own uneasiness. She lifted the baby up as though to see it for the first time. The baby was wearing a little pink sweater coat one of the nurses had knitted. Sister Bernadette knew that Baby Macsorley had become the pet of the nursery. Only last night one of the nurses had performed a mock marriage between the baby and another fine baby boy who was being taken home that day. When she put the baby back into the crib she found herself kissing her on the forehead and patting her back, so she hoped, quickly, that no one had seen her.

As soon as she saw Doctor Mallory next day she blurted out, "If you don't get that baby out of here by tomorrow, I'll throw it in the snow bank."

Doctor Mallory was a bit afraid of her now, for he knew that she was a determined woman, so he said, pleading, "Wait till tomorrow. I'm trying to get one

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particular lady to adopt it. Wait till tomorrow. I'm working on her."

"You'll have to work faster, that's all," Sister Bernadette said without even smiling.

Instead of one day, she waited two days longer, but now she was so angry that whenever she went into the nursery and saw the baby, she felt herself resenting the young mother with the candid blue eyes and the baby blond curls and the bold straightforward lover who came so openly to the hospital and felt no shame. Once Sister Bernadette picked the baby up and then put it down hastily for she felt with disgust that the sordidness in the life of the mother and father might be touching her through the baby and disturbing her too much. "I can't go on thinking of those people," she muttered, "the baby goes out of here tomorrow."

But Doctor Mallory was avoiding her and she didn't have a chance to speak to him for three days. She saw him turn a corner and duck into an elevator. "Doctor," she called, "listen to me. I'm going to put that baby in the rear seat of your car and let you drive off with it. We're through with it."

"Why, what's the trouble now, Sister?" he said.

"It's demoralizing my nursery. I'll not have it," she said. "It's the pet of the whole place. Every nurse that goes in there at night picks it up. The baby's been there too long, I tell you."

"But just thinking about it surely doesn't bother you."

"Certainly it does. It's staring me in the face every night."

"Here's some cheerful news then. Maybe you'll be rid of the baby tomorrow. I'm getting an answer from the lady I wanted to adopt it tonight."

"Honestly, Doctor, you don't know how glad I am to hear that," she said, taking a deep breath.

There was so much light-hearted relief within Sister Bernadette when she entered the nursery that night that she had a full, separate smile for each baby as she moved, a tall, black-robed figure, among the cribs. And when she stood beside Baby Macsorley's crib, she began to chuckle, feeling it might now be safe to let the baby have some of the warm attention she had sometimes wanted to give. She seemed to know this baby so much better than all the other babies. Humming to herself, she picked up the baby, slapped her on the back and whispered, "Are you really going away tomorrow, darling?"

Carrying the baby over to the window she stood there looking down at the city which was spread out in lighted streets with glaring electric signs and moving cabs, the life of a great city at night moving under her eyes. Somewhere, down there, she thought, the bold young girl with the confident eyes and her lover were going their own way. As she held their baby in her arms, she muttered, frowning, "But perhaps they really are in love. Maybe they're out dancing." The girl and her lover belonged to the life down there in the city. "But that man ought to be home with his wife," she thought uneasily.

Sister Bernadette began to think of herself as a young girl again. For the first time in years she was disturbed by dim, half-forgotten thoughts: "Oh, why do I want so much to keep this one baby? Why this one?" Her soul, so chaste and aloof from the unbridled host swarming nightly in the city streets, was now overwhelmed by a struggle between something of life that was lost and something bright and timeless within her that was gained. But she started to tremble all over with more unhappiness than she had ever known. With a new, mysterious warmth, she began to hug the child that was almost hidden in her heavy black robes as she pressed it to her breast.

ATQUE VALE

By Robert Nathan

WHERE I am going there is no despair.
The daily tide and current of the breath
Is there withheld; there is no weeping there,
No foe like grief, no enemy like death.
Where I am going there is neither light
Nor dark nor joy nor mystery nor fear,
No songbirds singing in the summer night,
No flowers folding in the dying year.
Where I am going there is only peace.
The weary heart is still and never moves,
The curving fingers never reach the cup.
All is forgot, the lover and his loves,
Even from hope the spirit has release,
And sorrow like a moth is folded up.

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A Couple of Nuts

A Story by Zelda Fitzgerald

The summer of 1924 shrivelled the trees in the Champs Elysees to a misty blue till they swayed before your eyes as if they were about to go down under the gasoline fumes. Before July was out, dead leaves floated over the square of St. Sulpice like paper ashes from a bonfire. The nights lifted themselves exhausted from the pavements; restless midnights settled over the city like the fall of a cooling soufflé in the bowl of early morning. Sleep was impossible and I wasted lots of time in Montmartre. The grass in the Bois was as baked from the heat as pressed flowers under a bell, and bed was only possible comparatively, so I lethalized myself in bôites-de-nuit night after night that I might find my apartment bearable afterward. That was how I got to know Larry and Lola.

They already had a certain clientele. I mean there were groups who drifted into their "club" specially to hear them play and offered them drinks and asked for their favorite tunes. The two kids sat in a state of watchful collapse holding on to the dying spring excitement as if they were having a tug of war with itinerant Americans who would have dragged it south. They were nothing but kids, either of them. She was a protruding Irish beauty, full and carnivorous, with black hair slicking up her conical brows, and hunter's eyes that trapped and slew her mouth. She moved the masses of her body with the slow admiration of a baby discovering its toes, deliberately, like a person at chess, so that it gave no impression of movement, just constant arrangement and rearrangement. You would have thought she had learned to breathe on the piano bench.

They played me the old war tunes and I jounced my youth upon my knee as if it had been a lusty grandchild instead of a string of intangible memories. We got to be sentimental friends. Sometimes very late when the place was deserted and shirt fronts sailed the thick smoke like racing yachts in a fog, they asked me for definitions of love and success and beauty. Larry would say tentatively, "Now, Lola, I think *she's* beautiful." Lola, piling herself very high, dismissed us tolerantly. "Of course we don't know much about life. We've always had each other." As if that were a sop to fate!

In those days of going to pieces and general disintegration it was charming to see them together. Their friends were divided into two camps as to whose stamina it was that kept them going and comparatively equilibrated in that crazy world of ours playing at prisoner's base across the Atlantic Ocean. Some people thought they weren't married, they were so young and decorative. They had walked across Panama on their honeymoon. A sort of practical imagination they shared pulled them in and nearly out of all their adventures, through the muddlings of high society's private checking accounts and through the sordid backwash that people rich enough to take their amusements seriously scatter behind them like wrappings from candy eaten along the way. If she had told for instance how she got the ruby bracelet she wore as a memento of a party they once played for on Long Island, a famous millionaire would have buried his face in the Sound, and I happen to know that it was a Duchess who paid for his sunstroke. But they themselves were at that time innocent children as faithful to each other as two aristocratic Borzoi on the same leash. Larry was wonderful looking. He humped his shoulders over his banjo like a football player huddling a ball. When he sang he opened his mouth sideways and howled and broke the notes and fitted them back together with the easy precision of cogs slipping into place, shaking the tones loose on the air as if he were freeing his fingers from some ticklish substance. If he had been born twenty years before, or in a country town, he might have worn a blond pompadour and clerked in the village drug store. Instead, he shared our generation's intellectual yearnings and was a little ashamed of his metier. "Oh! —oh—oh" he sang, luring the boldness of great ladies from mulatto staccato to Spanish persuasion and "tum —diddle—um—dum" he urged them back again till they didn't know what they felt. He was a banjo-player, and they were the people who rose with the moon and swamped his soul in uncategorical dismay. He had the nicest face opening out beneath his eyes like wide and friendly prairies in a copper glow. His smile tucked up his skin back of one ear like satin skirts held high from a rainy pavement.

Well, they managed to stick together through everything when they couldn't pay for their sheet music and had to refuse the champagne that was offered them because of their empty stomachs. Afterward when unhappiness used up the unexplored regions in their laughter and hardened their gestures into remembered

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mimicry they got to love telling people about the hard time they had had getting started. It must have brought them closer for a moment, retracing the days when they knew they couldn't have borrowed five dollars.

When they first floated up on the heat wave they made music in a dump that prides itself on discovering new people. Their patrons later turned out to be the heroes and heroines of half our modern novels and their fortunes rose on the insatiability of the Paris lion-hunters. So long as there is money to buy leisure there is the necessity to forget we have it, and Lola and Larry might still be successfully blasting Time from the stones of the rue Pigalle if they hadn't gradually become obsessed by their "rights."

That was what engaged them in an eternal round of petty quarrels. It was either the drummer who wanted to get them fired or the bartender whom they suspected of making dirty cracks about them, or the manager who was an impossible person. The domestic element in Lola's life was replaced by these pitiful bickerings, and I suppose that for him they satisfied some instinct of taking things in hand, the same as paying the weekly bills does for most of us. They seemed to forget the ultimate dispensability of jazz singers. One night they lost their job—drinking, I think. When I came in, Lola's cheeks were floating over the room like two red clouds, her eyes playing about the edges of the manager like an Indian sword-thrower, picking out his bulky form against the desolate room. The bôite somehow seemed inside out in the confusion, bolstered together like the wrong side of stage scenery. You could see the joints in everything, even the people. Larry was all for a placative attitude. He stuffed his hands in his pockets as if he gathered back his words in fistfuls to carry away with him. I heard him say to Lola: "There's nothing to say. You can't argue with a kike like him. Get your coat, that's all." I walked along with them under the dripping shadows of a Paris night, mauve and rose-quartz under the street lamps, pattery, clattery before the yellow cafés, droning, groaning, sucking its breath up the dark side streets, and I lent them twenty dollars to pay their board bill when I left them at their dingy pension.

"That old crab," Lola exploded, "he just wanted to get rid of us, said we sat around with all of you too much and didn't play enough to suit him. Sometimes I sang so much that my voice sounded like convicts breaking rocks by morning—and out we go at the end." She turned to Larry like a well-behaved child who had upset his glass at the table. "Well, what'll we do now—what will Larry and Lola do now?"

Jeff Daugherty was the answer to that—a genial expatriate who counted his spotted ties in hundreds and expatiated his existence with discoveries of the last word in entertainment. All of us who had ever been short-changed out of a five-franc note or tried to cash a check at lunch time or had any dealings with a French post office brought our violence to Jeff, confident that he could tell us where to find echoes from America to soothe our nostalgic lamentations. Larry and Lola took him by storm.

You would have thought they were buying a seat on the stock exchange if you'd heard them discussing how much they were going to ask him, to play at his dinner. They fixed on the absurdity of twenty-five dollars. It was the first time Jeff had been presented with a bill as small as that since college; it moved him to a patronly feeling. "I've got rather a nice little place on the Riviera, where I'll be in a week," he said, tracing their future on one of his calling cards. "Come down and play for me there." Jeff drew a magic circle round his phone number. "That," he said, "is the combination of my private safe." They told me that they ran all the way home that night, their feet just tickling the pavement like the feet of marionettes, strung with happiness at the possibility of getting out of Paris.

It was late in the summer when I got away to Cannes. All the gay and glamorous people had floated off on the fumes of alcohol to Biarritz and Switzerland, Vichy and Aix-les-Bains to steam and sweat and look with satiated moralism over other gambling tables than those that wilted in Mediterranean vapors. I hadn't been long at my hotel when Jeff phoned me for dinner. He had never been a great friend of mine but the season was disintegrating, already split into quarrelling groups and cliques intent on their private affairs, and I was glad to fit in somewhere. "I've got hold of two lambs," he said, "and I'm giving a slaughter. If your sanguinary tastes are nicely developed you might drop in." Since I have for years considered all of Jeff's friends more or less of a menagerie, I never thought twice to ask for details. After a day on the parched beach I squirmed my dinner clothes over my puffy, sunburned back with my shoulders feeling like a package of live fish and my arms running up and down themselves like vibrating rubber and I damned Jeff as an animal-fancying exile, who meant no good to us who intended to escape from life. By the time I arrived, a group about the piano were whipping the party round and round like one of those gyroscope affairs to keep an airplane from falling. There was a lush hardness in the voice that sustained it, a voice removed from personal appeal, a prince and princess quality, gracious and cavalier. Most of those ingratiating voices that hang on the air like juicy ripening fruit hold a promise of initiation—this one didn't. It was a secret you could never share, as detached from its owner as from you. I knew it was Lola. Nobody else could sing like that. So Jeff was going in for trou-

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badours! The confident notes whipped the summer night to a negroid frenzy and she sang about "loving you—you—you." She put on a show about being glad to see me and made the party roar with an account of how she'd cheated their landlady out of my twenty dollars and blown into Cannes on the profit. I thought she was over-exuberant and after a while I decided that they were both respectably but quite definitely drunk. When Jeff drinks it's because he has been drinking for so long that liquor is as much a part of his daily ritual as his morning massage, and when I drink it is to fill up the gaps in human relations, but Lola and Larry were drinking to create the illusion that they had some reason for it. I suppose it didn't make any eventual difference, since somebody else paid for their drinks, but they hadn't yet staked out a claim for themselves on the face of this difficult earth, and it depressed me to see barriers go crashing before they were constructed. Jeff hung over the piano, svelte and proprietary. Even when he joined the scattered tables you could feel Lola's attention following him, participating in his security. Larry seemed flattered, or thought he should be, by Jeff's attention to his wife. Anyhow, he talked to me in alcoholic modesty for a long time, and when the party shattered itself on the back of the August night, I drove him home. We left Lola in the midst of innumerable "My dears" and promiscuous "Darlings" tidying up the immaculate Jeff as if he'd been a cabinet of bibelots, and he extremely passive even for a cabinet. Next morning Larry was very determined in his attempt to be worldly about the fact that Lola got home after breakfast, had skated in on his fried eggs, so to speak.

Well, the rest of that summer Larry's rôle was not to care. He was awfully good at it and grew as stolid as a substitute half-back; toward the end he didn't even seem to expect to be called into the play. Financially, they had done very well by themselves, playing at private parties and finally organizing a short-lived club which rocked itself to a lonely, delirious death to the tune of her garrulous blues. It was pounded out of existence by the roar of the autumn sea. Jeff left with his fatuous coterie. We three shivered alone in the prickly sunshine of the beach. The ocean turned muddy and our bathing clothes didn't dry from one brisk swim to another; we grew irritable with the unspent tang of the sea. They made certain pretensions at a sophisticated coldness between them, but I could see how necessary they were to each other even in their disagreements. Larry behaved as if he'd been brought up on the Murad advertisements, and Lola was proud of his pseudo worldliness in spite of her inflation at Jeff's attention. Being always a little bit chilly was ruining my disposition and I decided to move on. They didn't know where they were going that winter so when I left I offered to drive them to Monte Carlo. The first day of school hung in the air, crisp and anticipatory, and resuscitated our dog-eared hopes as we drove along. We stopped for beer and cheese along the way and looked sentimentally on the fall concision of the Mediterranean. Those white and blistered palaces that line the Nice sea front had opened their shutters once more and the gray rocks about the coast were no longer vaporous bathings of sunshine but scenery preening itself in an invitation to be appreciated as obvious as the coquetries of a marriageable daughter. The country was selling itself. We absorbed its bright confidence, a sort of transfusion of light after the summer gulling.

When I rode off into the carnation-padded hills of Italy and left them there in the subdued hubbub of Monte Carlo, I had somehow a feeling that they were all right, safe with the rich and privileged. My emotion may have been evoked by the outlandish number of policemen there were about. Have you ever noticed what a lot of watching the rich seem to need?

II

In Rome I had a letter. "Jeff got us a wonderful job at a café de Paris, but we haven't been able to save any money. We hate to bother you like this but Lola's in trouble and if you could spare us forty dollars, you know how grateful we'd be. We can't afford a child at present, though we both feel terrible about it." Of course I sent it and they continued to write me from time to time. In the course of our correspondence, it developed that the last of some Pharaohic dynasty had lent them one of those apartments consisting entirely of boudoirs, whose blinding fronts corset the pompous hills of Monaco with musical comedy stairs. They were apparently living in royal disarray, drinking and playing, and howling like Banshee from the yachts in the harbor. They referred to the Egyptian as their "nigger friend," and taught him the Charleston and in spite of their hang-overs remained dependent on each other. Their stuff was spectacularly American and they made a killing at it, being simple kids. It wasn't until another spring that I saw them again in Paris. Frankly, Larry looked as if he'd just slept out the year in a cloak-room. The stagnant smoke of night-clubs had worn an embalmed, unearthly swirl over his head and he was as glazed as the surface of a delicatessen mince-pie. They were prosperous and very much in vogue. Both of them had acquired a calculating quality and I missed the old "nothing to lose" bravery that used to be in their music when they tipped over their chair-backs and sang. I asked them out with me but they were always busy. Life had become a sort of Virginia reel of dissolute counts and American millionaires and

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disillusioned English—and Jeff. Larry was funny about Jeff. He treated him now as if he'd been a rare find from some obscure curio shop that he'd managed to buy for Lola with cautious saving. Of course, Jeff wasn't serious about Lola, but he followed her everywhere, batting her cigarette ashes with his signet ring and picking up the little bits of her that seemed to detach themselves whenever she moved.

"What do you think of this fellow Daugherty?" Larry asked me one night, assuming a confidential air as if Jeff had come up for a club election. "Well, I don't know," I answered. Jeff was an older, if more casual, friend of mine than Larry and I wasn't going into the days when he had had an artificial shower arrangement outside his windows to keep girls from leaving his apartment, and was only saved by his youth and suavity from the accusation of lechery. "He's a charming person, really. He used to write musical comedies years ago."

"Oh! did he? Were they any good?" Larry's face fell in blank incredulity. He couldn't bear it that Jeff should have had ambitions, and perhaps talents, the same human attributes as his own.

"Well, yes, I believe they were good—something very special and sophisticated for that time."

"Why did he give it up? You know, I think *Europe* is a bad influence. I mean, life's so easy over here. I've been trying to get Lola to go home." You could tell by the way he balanced the words and tentatively meted them out that the idea had just come into his head. I supposed he wanted to get Lola away from their environment and Jeff. I cannot tolerate buoyant comedy characters when they lapse into that attitude of baffled seriousness just "to show you the stuff they're really made of," so I paid my check and walked off, feeling rather pleased with myself that I hadn't betrayed Jeff: I so often do make nasty cracks about my friends. I didn't see Larry again until June.

That spring the lilacs dumped their skirts over the walls in the Boulevard St. Germain and wanderlust sprinkled the air. I wanted to stop at every "Rendezvous des Cochers" and "Paradis des Chauffeurs" I passed as I strolled along. It was like walking with a child beside you, the morning was so tender. I had got as far as the Café des Deux Magots, enjoying the people airing themselves on the sidewalk, when Larry caught up to me. I expected some coldness when I remembered the abrupt end of our last meeting, but he was beaming away in the daylight like a beacon left burning from the night before. "We're going," he said triumphantly, as if we'd never parted. "Sailing at noon tomorrow. At first Lola didn't want to for a damn, but I finally got her to see that if we're ever going to make a name for ourselves we've got to go home now while we're known and settle down."

"I think you're very sensible," I said cautiously, in surprise. It seemed rather silly to me that they should tear off just now when people were beginning to recognize them over here but of course I guessed his motives. There had been some malicious talk about Jeff and Lola. He slipped his hand under my arm and we slid down one of those brown streets padded with humanity that mark dark vistas to the Seine. The shadows cooled the inside of my nose like a breath of melting snow; the sun was fragile as a blown glass casing around the world. Larry stopped and lit a cigarette. Something in his movements suggested a boy scout about to perform a good deed. I waited. "Say," he said, "if you see Jeff any time soon you might tell him I'm sorry I was rude the other night. I'm afraid I was awful. I thought he was pawing Lola but as soon as I sobered up I saw how absurd I was. You will tell him, won't you, and that Lola sends her love? And say, I'm gonna send him a check for what I owe as soon as we get to America." He seemed relieved after that as if he had somehow discharged all obligations and could now withdraw from the scene with a clear conscience. I left him by the river where it flows like a typewriter ribbon printing the alphabet of Paris on the city itself, wishing them good luck and bon voyage. As it happened I hadn't seen and didn't see Jeff for six more months.

I woke up one Sunday morning having lost my superiority on Saturday night and I thought it would make me feel more respectable to look at the cold equilibrium of the Luxembourg statues. So I did every surface thing a person can to myself and delivered my interior chimney-sweepishness onto the sidewalks. Symphonic taxi horns blew the muffled suppression of Sunday calmly through the narrow streets as I trod the quiet tones through the soles of my shoes. I ran into Jeff by accident outside the Museum and we decided to lunch together. I suppose people with like habits discover the same escapes from them. We went to Foyot's where we devoted two hours to eating ourselves into a lethargy. We soon exhausted our categoric conversation, and searching the past for tit-bits, I remembered Larry's message. Jeff smiled with dubious scepticism and when he saw that I disapproved of that particular conquest he began to expand in self-justification. Jeff is a bore when he expands; he usually goes into details about how much it cost in telegrams to extricate himself and leaves you guessing as to the situation but I was interested in the kids and it was a long time since I'd had any news of them. "Lola and Larry," he commenced, "are a couple of museum pieces, early Neathandral I make them. I don't see why they can't take life like adults. I was very fond of her, you know, and he seemed a nice sort of chap, so when they left Europe, I sent out mail-order blanks

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to some friends who used to put on my fiascos in the days when failure was still a novelty to me, trying to get them a decent job. Maybe you know 'les Arcades?' Well, it's so chic that people sit about in a gun-man hush and sense the satisfaction that they're paying ten dollars more for their champagne than all the other people similarly seated in similar circumstances. They were supposed to sing and pass themselves off as society toughs. They got away with it beautifully for a while. I mean, they fitted all the current adjectives, 'hectic and delirious and killing' and all that, and people went there in droves to keep from having to think up new epithets for their conversation. Everything went along like fire-works in an oven until my ex-wife appeared on the scene, or until the scene swallowed her up, I can't make out which. Mabel, you know, rejoices in her quaint Victorian ways and I suppose it hurt her pride that there should be a man in America she hadn't slept with besides myself. So she began making passes at that handsome exterior of Larry's, which, I believe, were eventually fatal. She'd turn up every night with Lord Ashes of Alley or the Hon. Hick-ups, and graciously surrender them to Lola. The four of them spent evening after evening gloomily soaking cigarette butts in the dregs of their high-balls, happily quarrelling. Mabel is a glamorous person, and she eventually located Larry's Achilles heel in Brett's Peerage. At any rate, Lola became pugilistic when she found she was losing Larry. When the situation got to the stale mustard point, the clientele, bored with the unpleasant aura, wandered off. I mean, everybody knew the four of them wanted to bash each other's faces in, and no reasonable person is going to squander a hundred dollars a night for the privilege of being sorry for two clowns. So they got fired. Well, one must live, and bread and whiskey are expensive since the war. Lola got a Broadway jackal to bring suit for alienation, and it looks as if the whole thing were going to cost some hundred thousand dollars. Mabel hasn't got a penny outside her alimony and the price is extravagant even for an eccentricity. Of course, I can't afford to have the mud-slinging in the papers. Really, these days I never know when my breakfast rolls will be loaded with dynamite. I suppose, however, it is my just deserts for fooling around with such a couple of nuts."

Jeff is a genial individual who learned his philosophy from check books and I confess that I envied him the equanimity with which he accepted his schooling. He drove placidly off in a taxi and I stood there in the skeleton sun terribly conscious of the frailty of human relations. I was wondering about the kids. They had possessed something precious that most of us never have: a jaunty confidence in life and in each other like the plaiting together of a lovely cravat from an assortment of shoe-string. What did Lola want? It seemed to me her broken heart came a bit high—a hundred thousand, Jeff had said, but I somehow couldn't believe she was the kind that cared much about money. Nevertheless, the blue surface of her eyes was jagged with a predetermination not to care, a vengeful quality like sharp rocks where the water is too shallow to dive. Larry was a nice fellow. I wondered if he had given in to Mabel to be vindictive. The whole thing oppressed me. I disliked thinking that where there had been something pleasant and clean and crisp as an autumn morning now there was nothing. To see them again would be like revisiting the scenes of my youth and finding my mother's house no longer there, so I put them out of my mind, as I would have dismissed a false conception when I found that it was wrong.

Three weeks later I picked up the paper and saw that ghastly tragedy staring out from the front page. The fact that it was Mabel's yacht made it headline news. They had all put off in a hurricane, Mabel and Larry and some of those imported brummagen of hers and the high sea swallowed them up like gulls pouncing on the refuse from an ocean liner. It was horrible. A boy who almost drowned once told me that while he was trying to keep himself afloat, birds settled on his head and pecked at his eyes. The papers said the sea that drowned them was the worst in forty years, so I hope they sank at once and weren't left there a long time struggling. Larry's body was never found, nor any of the others—only Lola. She lay for weeks in a recuperating hospital. Lola wrote me a pathetic letter when she got well again. "Can you spare me some money? I think I've got a job in a new show that's opening in the spring, but you know we never saved anything and I've got to get along until then. You've always been so kind to us and now that I haven't got Larry any more all of our friends seem to have disappeared. I could ask Jeff but sometimes I feel that if we'd never known him none of this would ever have happened. He and his wife were such a couple of nuts. What were we doing on a yacht? Before we met Mabel we could always quarrel well enough at home and forget about it afterward."

Lola and Larry! No, they never saved anything. Well, I sent her the money and I suppose she'll be all right for another five years. She'll be pretty that long anyway. It takes time a good thirty years to batter down a woman's looks and crumple the charm she acquires from moving in a world she finds rich in that fantastic quality. Poor kids! Their Paris address turned up just the other day when I was looking for my trunk keys, along with some dirty post-cards and a torn fifty-franc note and an expired passport. I remembered the night Larry gave it to me: I had promised to send them some songs from home—songs about love and success and beauty.

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Address to the Young Men

By William Harlan Hale

Forced into the Opposition by the bungling of present political leaders, thousands of young people seek some standard around which to rally. Mr. Hale, a graduate of 1931, sounds a call to stir young men and women from cynicism and apathy into active participation.

In the world's system today, there is little place for the energies of the youngest generation. Thousands of us are leaving the American universities every year, armed either with the swank B.A. of a New England country-club or with the more prosaic certificate of a Western industrial college; but the training and the sheepskin fol-de-rol do us not the least bit of good. The great business houses have given up their annual custom of taking on selected men from each graduating class. New enterprises are not being launched—and show few prospects of it. We of the college generation might as well face the facts: there are no jobs, and there are not going to be any for a long time.

In Germany the universities are turning out armies of supremely well-trained technical experts and scholars; but the young masters of the classics have been working as day laborers, while the high-honor mining engineers have become miners. Now the mines are closing.

In England, the situation among the graduates of all but the two ancient universities is little better. Everywhere, the "academic proletariat" is growing from day to day. In all these countries, the businesses and professions are waiting, the young men are waiting, but nothing happens. The machinery is jammed with monkey-wrenches. Now, in Europe the young people realize the fact. They not only realize it, but they are putting their heads together to understand and alter. They refuse to sit by and starve. They are staging mass-meetings, distributing propaganda, testing the chances of socialism, arguing out the communist case, or joining the reactionary storm-troops of Hitler. They have looked the general mess in the face, and have resolved to do something about it.

During the last year in America, dozens of editorials in college papers have appeared damning politics as "dirty," and expressing the young man's contempt for public life. Probably all of us have spent hours jeering at what we see as the notorious ineptitude of our system. We have reviled, perhaps, the bungling of a Stimson, the insincerity of a Mellon, the intellectual cowardice of a Hoover. We have scorned the party politicians for their abject marriage to big industry. We may have become repelled by the antics of a Brookhart, a Heflin, a Lucas, a Rainey; or estranged by the militarism of a Senator Hale and his clanking chorus of admirals; or disappointed by the helplessness of the so-called Progressives. Some of us have given more thought, and attacked the colossal fallacy of the high tariff, and the colossal injustice of Republican denial of the "dole"; we may have gone so far as to tinker with the notion of cancelling foreign debts or to call for America's responsible participation in the affairs of Europe. Some of us, more radically inclined, may have dreamed of great national projects of modern industrial housing and of communal architecture; we may have thought of a dozen civic reforms; we may even have given our thought to Labor. Most of us have not cared so much; we have restricted ourselves to mocking what we consider the insulting heritage of Prohibition, regarding that world-famous blunder as the very symbol of a bad government.

And so we have gone our way.

Now let us look once more, at ourselves and at this world, before we become resigned to our great luxury of cynicism and apathy. If we scorn our leaders for their display of insincerity and cowardice, then does not that mean that we must ourselves display sincerity and —courage? We spent our early years in the chaotic temper of the twenties, when intellectual revolt was supine in the face of physical contentment and prosperity; we may have followed the sparkling words of a Mencken or the shrill voice of weekly liberalism, but our fathers were playing the market. What became of our Progressive reading? Words, words, words. Can we now still afford to deal in such a proud and exclusive realm? Have we any longer the right to mouth bright criticisms, and then sit back and chuck it all? Can we sit back? What are we waiting for?

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How long shall we go on lamenting the fallen virtues of capitalist America and the sorry horizon of our future, in the same breath that we scoff at all political interest? We speak with dismay when describing a system in which millions go without food while the unsalable wheat rots in its granaries, and the southern farmers plow under the furrows of their profitless crops; we stand amazed when we see the thousands and ten thousands of idle new machines while there are endless hands waiting to man them, endless hands waiting to receive their produce. We all know these things, and they make us more than sad. We walk around with bankrupt checking accounts. Over dinner we still voice our disgust. But what are we going to do—keep on sneering? What further excuse is there for our hesitance?

The time is come—now, this minute—for the young man's severe and solid entry into political action. We stand on the eve of an election. We read day in and day out the bickerings and evasions of both parties; we perceive the growing lack of any platform that is a platform. We are made to endure more pussy-footing, fence-straddling, and the silence of the few voices that we had supposed to be courageous ones. We see every one blaming every one else for the depression, and fearful to accept responsibility or to prescribe any remedial medicines beyond a local bromo-seltzer.

The time has come for the youngest generation simply because the entire authority of the older has now finally and ruinously collapsed. We are confronted with the pathetic jittering of our former industrial gods and mechanical geniuses; we hear Hoover's statement that there is no relation between war debts and reparations; we hear Stimson's statement that Europe must take the lead in disarmament; we hear Mellon's statement that the present economic arrangement is basically safe and sound. The visage of the world remakes itself, the spokesmen repeat their ancient chants. But the spokesmen belong to a world that is dead, while the new world is to belong to us. We must finally declare our vote of No Confidence, and then go about establishing confidence in ourselves.

"Lost leadership"—this is the symbol of our present days. And only the force and participation of young people can bring about an alteration in what now passes for leadership. The first step in this participation must be a total change of attitude on the part of the young man toward the world of politics and public life. The editorial cynicism and complacency expressed throughout dozens of our college papers are the last dying notes of our former effeminate escape. Now, under our very eyes, a change is beginning to manifest itself. The ideal of business, which once we hailed as holy, is now fallen on evil days; and it is logical that the new ideal to replace it should be none other than the ideal of public duty. Our young generation was brought up to believe that the less government there was, the better. Leave a private industrialist alone (that is, let the State protect the producer), and he will usher in a millennium; have government interfere with his operations (that is, let the State protect the consumer), and the whole glory will collapse. But what have the last three years taught us in respect to this particular doctrine of liberty? They have simply taught us that the reverse of it is true. Business man's monopoly, curtained under the deceiving banner of "rugged American individualism," has not proved to be our salvation. The traditional aid and protection given to the producer has only helped to bring about a national bankruptcy. It is now necessary to reverse our method, and give aid and protection to the consumer. This is the path that is surely dawning before America. The protection of the producer was the ideal of business—a fallen one. The protection of the consumer is the ideal of public duty—a rising one. The destiny of our national economy inevitably points to a new popularity of government and politics. The young generation will find a great new field opening before it. It must try to comprehend all the storm-signals and the directions, and to take charge. The time has come.

The next step in our awakening to public activity must be a realization of the power of our vote. To express one's disgust with the present line-up of candidates by not going to the polls is no expression at all; it is the absence of one. The young man must get over the notion that his one poor puny vote will never count in the flood of political manipulation. He must get over it, simply because there are several million young men who feel the same way as he. They belong to a club whose only existence lies in their never coming together to meet. If something awakens them, and they all should meet—well, the millions of votes are not to be laughed at.

But how is this young man to use his vote, granted that he finds himself estranged by the conservatism, the flatulence, and the emptiness of the two great parties? He can use it only through organization. The most pressing question for any young political enthusiast is, where to begin and how to orient this organization. What is the prevailing temper among educated youth—what percentage of it leans to "boring from within" one of the two traditional parties, what percentage to the establishment of a third party of the closely knit Nazi type, what percentage to agreement with the Socialist organization, what percentage to adoption of the Communist programme? The next years must witness the great effort to find common denominators between the divergent mentalities of our country's youth; and

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then they must witness the establishment of organization on the basis of such denominators. At the start it certainly seems that a submission to the dogmatism of the imported disciples of Karl Marx would lead to little else than an alien party of protest. It also seems that Norman Thomas's brand of socialism has anything but a strong ideal to offer in point of plan and method. Indeed, our whole experience with third parties has been a melancholy one: Favorite Sons, regional factions, Farmer-Labor and Bull Moose parties have not got us very far, except to confuse the authority of the electoral victors. Would a front of young Americans be most effective if it were organized as the progressive wing of either the Republican or the Democratic group, hoping eventually to take over the entire control of the party in question?

These are difficult problems; and for the present there are unanswerable objections to each suggestion. At this time it seems hopeless for us to force either one of the old parties into a positive stand on Prohibition or disarmament. The fact that the country is swinging more and more to a sound belief in low tariffs is lost even on the supposedly free-trade Democrats. And the necessities of international co-operation—through debt reduction or cancellation—are still being ignored by leaders including such honest and liberal men as Governor Ritchie. The main parties are offering no programme whatsoever which can appeal to the affirmative and forward-looking instincts of young America; will it then be possible for young America ever to co-operate with them? How shall we organize, in order to avoid on one hand the compromise with near-sighted and unrealistic capitalism, and on the other hand the surrender to a brackish minority of Marxian intellectuals?

It is not easy. But our political life must begin.

Begin—how? Certainly we shall get nowhere if we set out with an overwhelming sense of our being a minority; nowhere if we conceive of our leaders as a band of æsthetic protesters, at war with the supposedly terrible vulgarity "that is America." We shall have not the faintest prospects of success if we launch another little magazine which may proclaim our tidy academic modernism in politics as the *Hound and Horn* proclaimed it for some young men in literature. We shall never get very far if we go self-consciously Union Square, and put on theatrical demonstrations over abstract problems and brilliant theories. If we give our leadership over to the perennial malcontents, to the smart disciples of violence, and to all others who work on tight intellectual programmes rather than on broad human tendencies, we shall have lost all our force at the start.

Through a vivid, youthful press—a thing that does not now exist, and which we must produce—we can seek to arouse the multitudes of young men whose public and political conscience still sleeps. But we need more than editorial planks. We need the founding of a strong party organization around a nucleus of leaders who have made up their minds and decided their plan of action on just a few specific major questions. When once a fighting impact is achieved, then a young man's movement can grow into a more general front, trying to bring as broad as possible a panel of objectives before its eyes.

It is a long road. But remember this: for the young man the would-be platforms announced in this present campaign offer no road at all. He is forced to belong to the Opposition. He must lift that Opposition from its current negation into an affirmative force. He must realize the failure of the old liberalism, and of all present or former reform parties; he must find something that is not just "liberalism" and not just "reform," but an invading power that is far greater than both. In the next few years, while he is practically without representation in the official chambers of the nation, he is going to struggle for a method of influence—first on his young contemporaries, and then on the heart of the conservative camp. He believes that there are many others—besides the customary radicals—who too are without representation, and whose call for a change is waiting, not yet clearly formulated or expressed. He is, he confesses it, an intense idealist. Perhaps that means he is a fool. But the events of the years now coming and upon us will change his unordered idealism into a clear eye, a steady nerve, and a fighting strength.

Can they make common cause? What do other young men and women think? We should be glad to have expression either in the form of letters or articles from readers under 35, with a view to presenting in our pages those suggestions and ideas which seem to the editors most interesting. The oldsters also have the privilege of sideline comment.

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The Plight of

In two articles in this number are presented two aspects of the intellectual ferment which is stirring as never before. Doctor Briffault sees the radical trend as an expression of idealism and a hopeful sign. William C. White, from his experience in Russia, shows where the road to the left leads. When the end of that is reached—where do the writers go?

I. THE LEFT TURN IN LITERATURE

By Robert Briffault

In a recent pronouncement on the measures intended to meet conditions which he likened to the devastation wrought by war, President Hoover recommended that every effort should be made to discourage "doubts about the future of the United States." The expression is ambiguous. The people whose faith in the future is most ardent are those who believe in mankind's infinite capacity for change; the darkest pessimists are those who believe in its immutability. Whether the future of the United States can be best secured by that scramble of private cupidities which has resulted in the accumulation of eighty per cent of the nation's resources in the hands of ten per cent of its population, and of unopposed political power in the hands of promoters of that process, is open to serious doubt.

That doubt is to a growing extent being voiced by writers. The trend of intellectuals toward the Left has been of late the theme of some comment. Many have forsaken their desks and typewriters to undertake investigations into social misery and oppression, and have, like Mr. Edmund Wilson, deserted the serene fields of literary virtuosity to plunge into the murky stream of sociological inquiry and to raise their voices against those postulates of rugged individualism which have been officially accounted the foundations of the nation's life and power.

The phenomenon lends confirmation to the Marxian theory that the very outlooks and æsthetic impulses of the mind, howsoever abstract and detached in appearance, are in the last resort determined by economic factors. It also indicates how deeply and effectively social and moral issues have been buried out of sight under thick veils of spurious values, falsified sentiments, and distorted thought. So long as reckless individualism thrived undetected in a fool's paradise of precarious profit, criticism of it incurred condemnation, not only in official quarters, but from the pundits of taste. It was not merely bad citizenship; it was bad art. One recalls William Dean Howells's pontifications over American literature and his assertion that its exponents, "true to our well-to-do activities," should concern themselves "with the more smiling aspects of life, which are the more American." In his book, "Money Writes," Upton Sinclair presents a varied array of illustrations of the subtle means by which the harmonious conformity of literary production with "well-to-do activities" has been secured.

In no country is freedom of speech greater than in America. But in no country also is the literary market more sensitively adjusted to what are conceived to be the demands of public taste. No one, of course, expects of a writer, creative artist, critic, or thinker, that he shall devote his talents to the bolstering up of a social system. His art and thought have the privilege of detachment, and lie outside political parties, rackets, and social strifes. He is not concerned with propaganda. It suffices that the estimates and values which his art and thought presume should be in keeping with prevalent activities, and should reflect by the tenor of their interests the complacency of those who are disposed to relish "the more smiling aspects" of those activities. It is important, above all, that he should not intrude into the picture those less smiling aspects which mar the perspective of eighty per cent of the social aggregate, and which, as Howells remarked, would be "as false and mistaken as dealing in American fiction with certain nudities which Latin peoples seem to find edifying."

The very standards of taste and theories of literature are thus unconsciously adjusted to preserving the harmony between established social principles and literary expression. Henry Hazlitt, taking up the cudgels in de-

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the Intellectuals

fense of the eternal canons, was reaffirming lately the frontiers of the empyrean domain of art regarded as a sanctuary of refuge from the asperities of life, and the distinctions between the qualities of form and the thought, views, or judgments upon which the artistic vesture is indued.

The occasion was an onslaught by Michael Gold upon those polished linguistic preciosities with which Thornton Wilder has adorned exotic themes, mellow with the flavor of remoteness and tinged with the light of mystic sentiment. "What relation," asked in effect the subversive critic, "has that vapid virtuosity to the poignant, throbbing realities of the living hour? Is not he who, whether as writer or reader, is content at such an hour to eat lotus in the amenity of Circean paradises kin to that misguided artist who fiddled while Rome burned?" Not only, so ran the charge, is such literature, at such a time, fatuous and irrelevant; it is bad art. For the expression of a mind that can stand aside, indifferent, while the most vital issues are trembling in the scales, and that is unfitted to sense their magnitude, is the expression of a mind essentially mean and paltry, whence no great art, no good art, no art that is valid and living can issue by way of significant creation.

The cultivation of public taste in the direction of such irrelevance under the disguise of cultural refinement is not a mark of serene and detached intelligence, but is on the contrary equivalent to clapping the most effective anæsthetic under the noses of a public all too disposed to slumber. I transcribe from a recent list of books recommended by an influential successor of Dean Howells: "Browning," by Duckworth; more Browning; "The Basque People"; "Worshipful Society," by Galsworthy; "Tone Poems"; "A History of Smoking"; "The Divine Comedy"; "Early Poems of Tennyson"; "O World Invisible"; "The Book of Living Verse," by mentally deceased versifiers; more "Poems." The pabulum is spiced with pressing preconizations of James Barrie and Maeterlinck. How utterly safe! The inquiring reader who desires to cultivate his mind may rest assured that he will not find within the covers of the prescribed books a line which may arouse in him a suspicion that he is not living amid those more smiling aspects of life which harmonized with the well-to-do activities of his grandmother.

That literary seclusion which seeks refuge in the doings of pious ladies in ancient Peru or of Greek courtesans with devotional dispositions affords occasion for the charge that literature, so conceived, serves chiefly as an ostrich strategy of retreat from confronting realities, and is a literature of escape. It is the trailing litter of an age which was above all concerned with escaping from inacceptable facts, social, moral, economic, intellectual and artistic. In those putative realms of detached creation and æsthetic delectation were reflected the falsity, make-believe, and meanness of a world which professed to honor high ideals and exalted sentiments, tender affections, moral obligations, the Beautiful and the Good, in its literature and with its lips, and which in its social life trampled those things brutally and ruthlessly under its heels.

It is that hypocrisy, all the more fulsome because it had grown to be so ingrained in people's minds as to be largely spontaneous and unconscious, which has been termed the spurious mentality of the bourgeois age. In that mental structure ideals were assimilated with the purple patches of high-sounding phrases, morality was a matter of pernicious pruderies, complacent charity did duty for the fulfilment of social obligations, petty hatreds and greeds assumed the name of patriotism, religion took the place of humanity, sentiment putrefied into nauseating sentimentality. Is it any wonder that the term "bourgeois" came to acquire the connotation of everything which is mean and ugly, in art, in taste, in intellectual endeavor and judgment? It was not a revolutionist, but the most fastidious of literary craftsmen, Flaubert, who said: "Hatred of the bourgeois is the beginning of all virtue." He was not thinking of social justice or of the revolt of the moral conscience against those schemes of well-to-do activity which have brought ruin and chaos upon the world. He was thinking of the values of art, of literature. And it is in that sense that to many American writers, and let me add to many American readers, the literature which merely aims at continuing the tradition of another age, and lingers among the sugary sentimentalities and pretenses with which, in an epoch of self-deception, the waxy and bloodless flesh of counterfeit thought was clothed is no longer tolerable.

The literature of the bourgeois age was a literature of bourgeois propaganda. No revolutionary doctrine has called forth more scornful protest than that promoted to a dumbfounded world by such apostles as Tretjakoff and Polonski to the effect that the function of literature is propaganda. Yet has it ever been anything else? The

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literary tradition of the Western world harks back to the Homeric bard who held the function of literature to be the propagation of long-haired Achæan chieftains' glory; to Christian literature which accounted the propagation of the Glory of God and of His Church its sole legitimate function; to Victorian and Puritan standards which were overtly dedicated to propagating bourgeois morality and combating any disposition to look facts in the face. The revolutionary literary formula does not greatly differ from that put forward by the sturdiest of Americans, Walt Whitman, when he declared that "Literature is big only in one way, when used as an aid to the growth of humanity."

The trend of literature, of intellectuals, toward the Left is nothing new. To the honor of humanity it has gone on since the world began. The fatuous canons of Dean Howells—which moved Van Wyck Brooks to query: "Could one ask for a more essential declaration of artistic bankruptcy?"—were being shattered to matchwood by a rising generation of American writers even while he wrote. What is new is the social and cultural situation in which that leftward trend is taking place today. It no longer leaves room, as in the past, for facile compromises. In proportion to the determination with which our grandmothers avoided unpleasant collision with facts, is the sharpness of the impact with which the present generation is brought into collision with facts. It is not this or that aspect of the human world or its interpretation which is being called into question, but the very foundations of all interpretations, the currencies of the mind. Living thought is off the golden standards of the ages of make-believe. Between the world of awakened intelligence and the world which sought refuge from the nudities of life in artificial literary values and conventions, the cleavage is so sharp and so deep that no language of compromise can bridge the abyss.

Every artist, every writer, every thinker stands today between those two worlds, and cannot escape the choice between them. To many that choice is terrifying. Hence the numerous forms which, in the chaos of contemporary thought, the literature of escape assumes. Those who have not heard that the Great God Pan is dead seek to build upon the carious premises of a tradition that is crumbling to inglorious dust. There are those who seek to rear Ivory Towers on the torn fragments of the tottering ruins. There is the hollow and helpless laughter of cynicism. Faced with such a choice, a man is either courageous or craven. And in literature, the most direct expression of man's inmost soul and belief, the intellectual courage which constitutes true individualism, is the sole source of vital worth.

The leftward movement which has always taken place in the direction of more sincere realism and closer touch with the facts of social life can proceed today only by transcending the values and tastes dictated by the narrow interests of a class. Formerly those standards passed from the aulic serenity of classic taste to the romanticism of sentimental idealization, and from this again to bolder realism or to escapes into mysticism and symbolism. Today the choice is narrowed down to a realism which shall not view social life from the standpoint of privilege and leisure, but from the standpoint of humanity as a whole. In that sense is living literature proletarian literature, because the scales of human values cannot be unweighted so long as the hand that holds them gathers the profits rather than the penalties of social chaos.

With the more direct economic effects upon literature of the crisis which journalese parlance, borrowing the jargon of questionable economics, is pleased to call the "depression," I am not here concerned. But one such effect is to sharpen the anxiety of selective agencies, critics, editors, publishers, to adjust the literary supply to the demands of public taste. In this, as in not a few other instances of business acumen which are largely responsible for present economic conditions, the over-exercise of that acumen is prone to defeat its own purposes. No creative product of the mind was ever, in the world's history, brought forth with a view to "giving them the stuff they want"—not one. Quite on the contrary. Every power of fruitful thought and creative emotion has imposed itself upon public taste by utter indifference to it. To gauge the mental demands of aggregate humanity is easy enough. All that is needful is to reduce standards and values to their lowest common denominator. But to assume that such a common denominator represents what is vital in a society, in a nation, and shall determine the process of its growth is as essentially false as it is cynical. The stupidities, the imbecilities, the vulgarities which provide puerile estimates, at Hollywood, for instance, of "the stuff they want" are for the most part the direct effects of a catering governed by those ungenerous estimates themselves. "The hungry sheep look up and are not fed."

A literature wearing the blinkers of a factitious and shallow optimism, dwelling upon smiling aspects, is, nothing can be more certain, not the literature which shall be conducive to a desirable future for the United States. That future could not be more profoundly betrayed than by a fatuous complacency as to the past and the present. "The marks of the progressive thinker," says Stuart P. Sherman, "are profound pessimism with regard to the past and infinite hope with regard to the future." No healthier token of that hope could the present time afford than the trend of American intelligence toward the Left.

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II. THE GOOD COMMUNIST

IS THIS WHAT THE NEWLY-BECOME RADICALS WANT?

By William C. White

WHEREVER members of New York's younger Intelligentsia gather these days the conversation leads eventually to the subject of the coming Revolution. It will be, of course, a Communist revolution. America's self-conscious intellectual movement has now a larger group than ever of the type that Trotsky once labelled "radishes—red on the outside and white inside!" As they talk glibly of the Communist Revolution they are making mental notes of the names of those whose executions they will personally supervise when the Great Day dawns.

The "radishes" would bleach promptly if ever the bond market went up. They are not to be confused with another group in the intellectual movement in America, particularly as it expresses itself in the literary world, who, in all earnestness, have professed conversion to Communism within the past months. Their sincerity cannot be questioned; they are sick of Capitalism and see their salvation and the salvation of the world (the two, curiously enough, always seem synonymous) only in Communism. The so-called depression, which Europe more honestly titles "the crisis," has revealed the flaws of the capitalist system with shocking clarity—its appalling depths of selfishness, hypocrisy, desperation, and seeming hopelessness. Against this blackness the promise of Moscow flames like Bengal fire. And a large group of our Intelligentsia have affirmed their faith in that promise and have founded their hope, their last hope, on it.

Yet the position of an intellectual converted to Communism and Revolution is a disheartening one. To judge from the Russian experience he, like Moses, may describe the promised land but the chances of entering in with the big parade of the Chosen People are slight. One must judge from the Russian experience. In making revolutionary radicalism a reality, Soviet Russia has trademark privileges to the word "Communist" and has thereby usurped the right to dictate all policy and all behavior for radical Marxians. And the organized Communist movement prefers to go on without the Intelligentsia; it distrusts them.

Thus the attitude of Thaelmann, head of the German Communist Party, a former longshoreman, when asked what percentage of intellectuals were in his Party. "Almost none," he replied, "and thank God!"

Thirty years ago the leaders and most of the members of the embryo Russian Communist movement were all of the Intelligentsia. Those days have passed. The various Communist parties the world over today prefer to follow the model of the Moscow party, which now boasts an almost solid proletarian makeup.

The intellectual (a word whose meaning depends more on one's attitude toward life than on education or profession) is primarily an individualist in psychology and point of view. He is, in theory, a thinker, not blindly responsive to those stimuli which affect the masses, but always analyzing, often rebellious, sometimes derisive. He judges society subjectively, trying consciously to find his place in it. That very attitude prevents him from being one with the masses and accepting life as it comes without questioning it. It is so in the very conversion of our Intelligentsia, conversion from within and not from without.

The individualist in capitalist society today has a hard time. Ruthlessly the wheel spins on and the fate of any one human being seems a matter of little importance in the system. Whether the intellectuals have turned to Communism from a growing consciousness of their own unfulfillment under Capitalism or, from objective reasons, because of an acute sympathy for the masses, is of no importance. A large group have done so, turning from the circus of Capitalism, passing the pink-lemonade stand of Socialism, and going over to the Communist side show. Having turned to Communism, they find that the individual under that system likewise has a hard time; they find, too, that there is no place for the intellectuals with their typical psychology in the Communist movement. They learn that they do not make good Communists. Every one resident in Moscow for any length of time has seen foreign intellectuals come, profess Communism,—then depart, their last hope taken from them. If, having renounced Capitalism, Communism fails them, where then shall they go?

In the days before the Russian revolution crystallized the Communist movement into a reality, the phrase "the Good Communist" had only a vague meaning. Now, after fourteen years of existence, there are as many unwritten rules and regulations to govern Communist ethics as there are by-laws for the members of the Loyal Order of the Moose. There is no brief official definition of "goodness" in the Communist movement; the party neither gives its members a summarized code of behavior nor lists the rewards of Communist virtue.

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But more than sufficient material has been collected to permit the study, by inference, of those qualities which the Communist Party desires in its members and through which it hopes at some date to wipe out both Capitalism—and sturdy individualism.

Not long ago a certain comrade Rakov died in Moscow and a eulogy appeared in the newspapers. I quote from the *Izvestia:* "He came from a proletarian family and joined the party in 1905. He fought against all attempts to break the unity of the party. Never did he waver from the 'general line' of the party. He never thought or cared about himself but struggled against all those who tried to substitute opportunism for Leninism. In him we have the figure of an honest, most upright Bolshevik, never once countenancing any infraction of party rules or hypocrisy toward the party."

In such a eulogy the world can see what qualities are desirable in a good Communist. Thirty-five years ago, when Lenin's fellow radicals consisted chiefly of a few scattered groups of the Intelligentsia, he emphasized the need for those qualities in any revolutionary party. From previous Russian experience he felt clearly that the Intelligentsia could do little and that their individualistic effort was of little importance in furthering revolution, compared to mass efforts. Enthusiasm without organization was sterile. He drew up plans for an organization—of the factory working class—and the few rules which he set characterize all Communist parties today.

The organization should be led by a little group of "professional revolutionaries"; its rank and file should be drawn from the factory-working classes—a group who by the very organization of their work are most amenable to discipline; and its leaders should demand and receive unquestioning obedience from their followers. Obedience to the implications of these three requirements determines the good Communist. A primer issued for those desiring to become party members says on its first page, "On entering the party you will put aside your own personal life and will, for the will and the faith of the Communist party." Insistence on this has enabled the Communists to live up so perfectly to that ancient axiom of Russian politics—"There may be any number of political parties in Russia at any one time so long as one is in power and the rest are in jail!"

From the first, Lenin stated that there was no place for individualism in the party, expressed either singly or by groups. The history of the party since 1897 is the story of the steady defection of the Intelligentsia. At the present time the process is nearly complete. A historian of Communism, speaking of the party of 1903, lists the leaders of that time and adds, "If we examine this list today we find few who would now be in the party." Differences over programmes and tactics have driven many from the ranks, of whom Trotsky is not the last.

The Communist Party today, numbering less than two per cent of the population of Russia, is kept small purposely to make better discipline possible. Almost three quarters of its membership are of proletarian origin, and it is ten times easier for a factory worker to join the party than for a member of the Intelligentsia or of the professions. This does not mean that the overwhelming majority of party members are employed in factories; it is enough to know that their origin is proletarian. Less than half the party are working in production and this number includes many who are in factories but only to do political work. Party members, rather, tend to enter administrative work, taking their places in managing the great bureaucratic machine which operates the government and the party organs. These are they who have found that the best career in Soviet Russia is in politics.

The group around Lenin from 1897 until 1912 was composed almost completely of Intelligentsia, if that word be defined as those having higher education. Today a recent Soviet "Who's Who," which gives the biographies of a hundred leading Communists, lists only eight with university training; six others finished high school. The remainder got their education in field or factory, in exile and in jail, and the old "professional revolutionary" still predominates in overwhelming proportion in the high councils of the party.

The first principle in Communist ethics is "party discipline." It implies not only fulfillment of the simple duties of membership but mental discipline as well. Those duties vary: they include payment of dues, attendance at weekly party meetings, and carrying on the chores which are assigned to individual members. These chores may consist of sparetime assignments to teach the theory of Communism in offices or factories, to collect funds for various campaigns, to sell State bonds, or to visit villages to convert the peasantry to the new agricultural system.

Far more important than these services, performed without extra pay, is the mental discipline which the party demands. The credo of the Good Communist is founded on the party programme—the "general line" of the party—which sets forth the official views on nationalism, war, justice, education, religion, and economics. That credo is supplemented from time to time by various "bulls"—resolutions on problems issued after party congresses or conferences, or sometimes set speeches and articles by party leaders. Newspapers often contain official interpretation of policies. I once drove across country with a party member who had memorized most of the editorials in *Pravda* for the month. His conversation bristled with statistics and was singularly monotonous.

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Party policy and tactics are usually fairly debated by the few hundred delegates at the biennial party congresses, and at the more frequent conferences of the leaders. Once they have been passed by majority vote there can be no further debate; they are now part of the credo. Party members may discuss them but only after digesting them.

The party leaders do not claim any infallibility on choice of policy; they are quite liable with little notice to find that the plans which they had presented are wrong. They insist, however, that this discovery come from the top and not from the ranks. The error is admitted and a new policy promptly announced. The Good Communist overnight may find himself liable to punishment for doing or believing the very things that brought him praise a month before. Tactics and policies do change frequently; but the eventual objectives and the faith of the party never vary.

In spite of the insistence on complete acceptance of the laws that come down from the Muscovite Sinai, party spokesmen often point to the member's right to "freedom of criticism." It is difficult to say where that freedom begins and ends. One party historian remarks, "If a member, using his right of freedom of criticism, turns away from the basic programme of the party, that is, begins to spread petty bourgeois ideas, naturally he must be punished." The attempt to encourage this "freedom" has not been overly successful, so the Good Communist sometimes finds it difficult to discover when he has turned aside from the basic programme. There is much criticism that takes the form of pointing to the shortcomings of fellow members, their actions and their failure to follow the programme.

Obedience to party discipline is the chief virtue of the Good Communist, and "fracturing it" his worst sin. It is refusal to accept the official dicta of party leaders and to submit to the mental discipline required to swallow a programme or a policy which has driven most of the intellectuals out of the Russian party. The same phenomenon has occurred in Communist parties in other lands—in the American party particularly. Criticism of official policies is bad enough but the sin is cardinal when it takes the form of attempts to organize secret groups within the party to combat its policies, or to overthrow the existing leadership.

Such grouping there has been in all the Communist parties and it probably continues. Taking a quotation from Lenin as a slogan, "Whoever tries to divide the party into groups works for the breakdown of the party and of the Soviet Union," Stalin and his friends set the whole disciplinary machine of the party against such treachery and use the same weapons of arrest, imprisonment, and exile that they would use against any bourgeoisie who might be plotting to bomb the Kremlin. Punishment for minor offenses may take the form of warnings, private or public, sarcastic notes in the newspapers, temporary dismissal from party work, or expulsion from the party.

The same "discipline" determines what the literary folk may write. Authors are severely criticized for not following the "Party line" in fiction. Plays are frequently barred because of "bourgeois ideology." Not long ago a play, "Sonata Pathétique," was taken off the Moscow stage, in spite of its high artistic merit. A newspaper reported naïvely, "The playwright, a Communist, accepted the decision of the government without complaint!" There are reports that greater freedom will be granted to writers in the near future.

At the same time "goodness" for the Communist means having a sense of responsibility. In the various positions which party members occupy there is much opportunity for petty graft and embezzlement. It would be pleasant to report that neither exists among party members; it can be said that instances are relatively rare and, when party members are caught, they pay more dearly than do non-party civil service employees.

The party has a Control Commission, which deals exclusively with breaches of discipline or responsibility; and it has an institution, the "cleanout," which might create havoc in our Republican and Democratic parties should they ever introduce a similar thing. At periodic intervals there are examinations into the activities of each member, conducted orally, in the presence of all the members by local party groups; in the two big "cleanouts" of 1922 and 1930 more than ten per cent of the membership was dropped. The Good Communist who strays permanently from the path of Communist virtue will quickly find himself no longer a Communist, and to be expelled from the party is no light punishment.

Reports of these "cleanout" campaigns show what the party leaders look upon as faults great enough to warrant that punishment. A great many members were dropped because they concealed their "social origins" and slipped into the party on a false claim of proletarian ancestry. By the "cleanout" the proletarian character of the party is re-emphasized. Among party members the last "cleanout" discovered "a former White officer who fought against the Red army," "a former wealthy merchant," "a former professor of literature who claimed to be an office janitor."

The lists contain many who have broken party discipline and many who have betrayed responsibilities; "Instead of helping to teach the illiterate at night, Abakhev spent his evenings gambling at the beer hall." "Lilov ruined the grain collection in his district by reporting that the harvest had failed. So no plans were made and too late it was discovered that the harvest had been very good." Then there are numerous miscellaneous reasons for expulsion: one member was dismissed because he

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had his photograph taken with a former Czarist official; another because he took his child to church for baptism; a woman because, upon being admitted to the party, she promptly went to church and burnt candles in thanks.

The "cleanout" committees receive comments and criticism on the behavior of the members from any one who cares to make them. They are not always careful to see that the complaints are not prompted by personal feelings. One complaint that a certain member, by his remarks, had broken "party discipline," arose, it was discovered, because the member had married the girl with whom the complainant was in love. These committees themselves have been reprimanded.

Committees have likewise been reprimanded for "poking into the private lives of members" with various questions: "Do you keep company with a non-party girl?" "Do you often have guests?" "How late do you come home?" "How do you get along with your wife?" "Why does your light burn until two and three in the morning?"

The Good Communist knows that between his "public" life and his "private" life there is a measurable distance. Members have been expelled from the party for "setting a bad example of heavy drinking." But, as one important party member said: "We don't care about the petty things in the lives of our members; we do not make a glass of vodka a basis for judging a revolutionary. We can't exclude all those members who drink; for then we should leave only the holy ones who are of no use to any one. We can only work for national temperance."

The question of "morals," in the Baptist sense of the word, does not trouble the Good Communist. Attempts to regulate this field of behavior have been ridiculed by party leaders. In one instance a verdict said: "A woman is not to be expelled from the party because she has divorced four husbands. We must ask only one question in judging our members, 'Is she a good party worker?' "

One of the most popular comedies on the Moscow stage today states clearly the ruling on "personal ethics." It shows two young Communists confronted with a grave problem. They, with their wives, are sharing one small room—a curtain dividing the two households; and each husband has fallen in love with the wife of the other. Here *is* a problem in ethics. They finally call on an older Communist for advice. "It's very simple," he replies; "you two need only move to opposite sides of the room." Then he applies the criterion that determines the Good Communist, as he continues, "You can do this, for the Revolution won't suffer therefrom."

This does not mean that the party will tolerate either continual drunkenness or scandalous "looseness," any more than it will tolerate thieving or lying.

But there is one aspect of the premise in Communist ethics, "you may do what you wish so long as it furthers the Revolution," which often discourages foreign intellectuals. The premise can be modified: "If it furthers the Revolution you must do it." At the basis of the Communist philosophy of State lies a philosophy of opportunism, a philosophy of using any means whatsoever if they help to approach the end.

In a cemetery near Moscow is the burial place of those of the GPU officials, the Secret Police, the former Cheka, whose reputed ruthlessness is well known. Over each grave is a board and on it the name of the deceased with the phrase, "An honored Chekist,"—which to many people, knowing of the measures which that Secret Police used and use seems a contradiction in terms. But the Good Communist must never question the means which the party uses; that, too, is part of the discipline which the party requires of its members.

Thus the Good Communist!

Unable, perhaps by nature, to submit indefinitely to the discipline required of Communists, the intellectual finds no welcome awaiting him in the Communist Party. His unwillingness to admit the infallibility of the Russian definition of correct tactics and instruments does not help.

There was an American liberal who came to Moscow and who began his sojourn there by showing great enthusiasm for all that he saw. "Here, at last, is a country that is doing all the things I have fought for during my life," he said, radiant, "shorter hours, profit sharing, giving the masses a fuller life!" In two weeks he was less confident of his enthusiasm. "But they are using force, threats, arrests, suppression of all individual rights—the very instrument against which I have warred all my life." Admiring the ends but hating the means used to attain them, he left Moscow, psychologically hamstrung. And the only comfort he received on departing was to be told by Russian Communists, "Your viewpoint is one of petty bourgeois sentimentalism!" A promising Communist labelled "petty bourgeois" by his Russian comrades!

There was a French Communist who came to Moscow and remained for a year and a half. He watched closely all that was going on and said little to the other foreigners in Hotel Bristol, where he lived. Finishing his stay he returned to France and immediately resigned from the party. "That is not Communism as I envision it—such blind submission! That is not *our* Revolution," he said, his last hope taken from him.

This is the discovery that awaits the intellectual turned Communist—that the Communist movement, Russian style (and Russia has sole patents on it), has no place in it for the intellectual who remains an intellectual. But, having renounced all faith in Capitalism, where then shall they go?

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What Was Truly Mine

A Story by Grace Flandrau

She came suddenly awake. The medicine they had given her the night before had had no effect until this afternoon, when at last she'd been able to sleep. Consciousness came back like a weight and she braced herself to accept it. It's not the will that lacks, she whispered. It's something else. She held up her thin hand and stared at it. Disease—there was something back of that. Alone the body could not. But what? Sometimes it seemed so near, the word, the secret, the power. But you passed it by, fumbling, straining to see like a blind man with wide-open eyes.

And now she became painfully aware of their voices, of Ed's, violent. Anxiously she raised on one elbow and leaned toward the door.

"All right, then don't. And let's shut up about it."

"Now wait a minute, Ed, let's talk this thing over."

"Christ, what is there to talk over?"

"You act as if it was the money. It's not the money——"

"Oh, no, I s'pose not—just the principle of the thing!"

"I get the heavy sarcasm but you happen to be wrong. It's not a question of principle, it's simply a question of what's practical, what's best all round, for Nellie, too."

In the pause that came she knew it was Milt who was lighting a cigarette. Ed wouldn't be able to smoke now. It had hurt him too much to do this, he hated it too profoundly. But Milt would smoke. He liked to send out impressive puffs, manipulate his cigarette with gestures. My only vice, he said. But even his smoking wasn't a vice; it was a mannerism. He never took the smoke into his lungs, not Milt. I've got too much respect for the body God gave me. He said it as if this were a unique arrangement between God and himself, the possession of a body. That was why he never took a drink, maybe why he never loved, too much respect for God's private gift to him. I never touch one, he might say of woman, just as he said, I never taste it, and turned his wine glass upside down. And if they quarrelled now drinking would come into it. Oh, Ed, oh, my dear—Something opened in her heart too dark, too bottomless. . . .

"The point is that it's always the same old thing. You don't look at the practical side."

"—What *you* call the practical side."

"Well, I don't seem to have been wrong very often, do I?"

"Oh, God, no. You've been right since the day you were born."

Oh, Ed, don't! Be patient. . . .

"What's the use of acting like this? Why can't we talk sense for a change?"

"Go on, then, talk. *Talk.*"

"Well, I don't want to rake up old history but take that commission business. Didn't I advise against it? And what happened? Inside of five years you had to close out."

"What else could I do? If I hadn't I'd have lost my shirt."

"That's just it, lost your shirt. And if I may remind you——"

"Hell of a lot of chance of your not reminding me!"

But Milt wasn't ready to be insulted. He wouldn't be satisfied so easily. He had his programme. "The only way, Ed," patient, "the only way anybody can learn is from past mistakes. Now that bank job——"

"But I had to do something, didn't I?"

"You didn't have to do that. I told you not to and where is the job now?"

"God, Milt, I didn't know the bank was going to close!"

"It did though."

"Sure it did. Yes. But I didn't *know* it would. Jesus, Milt, can't you see that's the point? With a little luck. . . ."

"Oh, well, if you're going to talk about luck!"

She lay back and put her hands over her face. The blood burned in her cheeks, her heart was beating too fast. Ed was shouting now. She ought to get up, she ought to go in and stop them. What voluptuousness did Milt get from forcing Ed through all this? It wasn't the money, she knew that. And his phrases, his incredible phrases now, at a time like this . . . you've got to be reasonable in this world . . . use common sense . . . look ahead. Ahead! They weren't real, they were fantastically imitation like something a robot would say.

Ed shouting and not able to say the only thing there was to say. Not able to put in words his awful fear. Nellie, she might die out there, that's why I can't let her go alone. He could only get angry and insult Milt. Insult him because he couldn't do anything about it, because Milt had had to pay for all the doctoring, for Nellie's trip out to New Mexico, for her expenses there.

The last number on the programme—Milt had begun

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about Ed's drinking. She put her head under the covers, pulled pillows over her ears. A chair was raked back and overturned. Ed no longer master of himself—"I don't want your money, I wouldn't touch a god damn cent. I'm not a drunkard, I'm not a beggar——"

So Milt was getting what he wanted, he was getting the passion of Ed's defeat. For it wasn't against Milt Ed was raging now, it was against himself. If Milt only knew that. But of course he didn't. And he believed too in the reasonableness of what he said. He didn't believe Nellie was going to die in New Mexico. He never believed anybody was really ill because he was never ill himself. Sharply she saw him now, his loose, bony, well-dressed body slouching virilely, his white hands paper cool to the touch, lips tight closed over impulses he didn't know he had, against follies he didn't know he wanted to commit. Assuaged by Ed's pain but angry too, points of cheek bones red. Assuagement wouldn't last but anger would and he'd begin to practise long speeches he would make to their friends, smug and icy—I hardly feel (dragging out the word feel) in view of all I've been able to do for Ed and Nellie, that Ed's violence. . . .

Robot talking, feeling outraged, maybe with reason, but what did reason have to do with love and suffering? Feeling so cocksure and superior and always knowing what other people ought to do and inside himself lonely, though he didn't know it, merciful and loving maybe, though he didn't know it. Only she knew. And she tired, lying there with all her awareness, awareness that terribly comes when death is near. If only each of them could know what she knew!

A door slammed. Ed had gone and now he would get drunk. It was quiet in the next room. At first Milt did not stir or breathe. Then after a time she heard him move about tidying the room. He emptied an ash tray, threw up the window. He hummed, a kind of mumbling with no tune. His footsteps came to her door. She lay very still. He seemed to listen, then turned and went away.

It was late that night, long after midnight, when he came back and came in to her. He opened the door softly and she saw him straight and correct in his scrupulous blue serge, his face white like a mask under his sleek black hair.

"I'm not disturbing you?"

"Come in, Milt." Face to face with a person, knowledge left you. Face to face she did not know him except as he knew himself. His surface became convincing, all. She saw Milt's Milt, a being that was superior, long suffering, quietly able. A being that was *always* right. But I don't believe it, Ed. Ed, Ed, I am not deserting you.

"You look very well." His cold eyes swept her with all his refusal to permit anybody to be not as he was. He pulled a chair round by the bed and sat down. He began to talk at once, fixing his gaze on a spot just above her head.

"I hope for your sake, Nellie, you were sleeping this afternoon. You would not have been edified. I bear no rancour but really, Ed's violence and abusiveness are such—" red stained his cheek bones—"that in future I shall simply do what I can for him and keep out of his way."

These words, apparently so final, gave no effect of finality whatever. All meaning seemed to be suspended, to await direction. After a moment she said:

"What do you expect me to say?"

His eyes dropped to her suspiciously, then looked again above her head. "I don't know what you mean."

"There's only one thing I can say. He's very unhappy."

Milt began to talk. "You'd think in view of past experiences, he would not be above taking advice once in a while. I have never refused him money——"

"That's just it," she said softly.

He looked at her again, defensive.

"Oh, don't you see? You've always been able to give him money and he's never been able to avoid having to ask."

"Well, then, he's got no business to be so hoity toity." He opened a little case and began to put together the two pieces of his cigarette holder. She thought he wanted her to say something while he completed all his finicky preparations for a smoke but she said nothing.

"I don't suppose smoke bothers you?" he asked and did not listen to her reply. "You see the situation as it is, I'm sure. You're a sensible woman. I take it you've no objection to going out there alone. You'll be well before you know it. Alarmists, all these doctors, they've got to be. That's the way they make their living. And meanwhile Ed'll be getting on his feet back here. Have something ready for you, when you get back."

"But he intended, after a little while——"

"Yes, yes; but there's no sense his going out at all." Milt frowned. "After all, my means are limited and you know what these times are. I'm glad to pay your expenses but Ed's got to stay with me. I mean he's got to stick to the job I gave him in my office."

He wants him. He wants Ed. He wants some one all to himself, in his power. And especially Ed. Need for Ed and for his power over him.

"I make that proposition at sacrifice to myself. It's no pleasure for me to have him about. And then there's drink. If people can't use liquor without abusing it, they ought to let it alone. Anything else is simply intolerable."

"Ed is not a drunkard."

"I don't excuse any lapses. None. Why should I, a sober man, be called upon to subsidize a bestial weakness?"

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There was more but she did not notice. She had heard a sound that was not quite a sound. Something brushed against the door and there was a deep breath like a sigh. The doorknob was fumbled, turned, and Ed came into the room. He entered warily, turned, and shut the door in a portentous imbecile way. Then he wheeled round, his eyes seeking her. Nellie. He would come straight to her, straight as he was able. His face was white but he did not reel. She had never seen him reel. Milt had risen. He had his left hand in his jacket pocket and he looked from Ed down to the clean finger nails of his right hand, doubled for inspection.

Ed saw him. "You, you—" he muttered thickly and lost his articulation in a murmur that seemed to be, I never want to see you again.

Milt raised his eyes and looked at his brother from head to foot. Then, over his shoulder: "Is there anything I can do for you, Nellie?"

"No."

He looked again at Ed, shrugged, and went out.

Ed came to the foot of the bed. Except for the instant he had glanced at Milt his eyes had not left her. They clung to her now and she knew a lifetime of words was pouring through them cursed with some doom of muteness.

"Eddie," she said softly. Ah, she knew all those things he was telling her. When she said Eddie in that soft voice something passed over his face. He leaned forward but still he was silent. Then he went carefully round to the other bed and sat down.

"Tired," he muttered. "A minute—" Almost at once he was asleep.

The night did not seem long, the court-house clock divided it so evenly into little pieces. Time went by too quickly now—that was the trouble. Morning came but the room was still dark. There was a fog outside. The clock struck seven. She realized Ed was awake. He sat up quietly. A carafe was by the bed and he poured several glasses of water and drank them. Then, careful to make no noise, he went into the bathroom. She heard him fill the tub, run the shower. When he came out he was dressed again. He had her thermometer in his hand.

"Nellie," he whispered.

"Yes, Ed."

"You awake?"

"Yes."

He looked sick. When he took the thermometer from her mouth his hand shook and he had trouble reading it. He wrote down the degree of fever. Then put on the spirit lamp to make her tea. She could not drink the bad coffee the hotel sent up.

"Did you sleep all right last night, darling?"

"A little," she said.

He set out the little teapot and her cup and saucer. He was slow and careful in his movements, a little clumsy. Suddenly he turned to her: "My God, Nellie, I just can't. I'd go crazy. You might—that is, if you got worse—Christ, Nellie, it's like being in a trap. Something always fixes it like this so I have to go to him, so I can't help it. And he sneers——"

"It doesn't matter, Ed, those things don't."

"They do to him."

"Not in the way it seems."

"He's got me under his thumb and he rubs it in. He despises——"

—Loves him too, she suddenly knew.

"Can't he see if it weren't for this I'd never, I'd rather die than—" His voice gave out. "Nell. Nell, I'm so unhappy. . . ."

My love, my little love. She put out her hands and took his, and drew him down beside her. Their hands touching. All at once there was only that. It did not change what they had been saying, it set it apart from them, a world apart. She felt the flesh of his hands against hers. His hands were not too firm or too supple, not too hot or too cold. And all of himself was in them, for he was like that. He was all of a piece, nothing divided, nothing held back. Simple, people called it. Was there no place in the world for men like that?

He sat close beside her and gradually everything yielded to the touch of their clasped hands. And vague there came to her something she had seen in a book—The transitoriness of the universe can take from me nothing that was once truly mine. Take from me! She closed her eyes over her tears.

"Ed, come closer."

Her voice was a whisper and came from far down, painfully deep down in her throat. He lay on the bed and his weight on top of the covers pinned them tight over her. Their bodies lay alongside each other's close, the covers between. She felt the flow, profound, of all of her to him, all of him to her. She felt her strength flow to him, her will, her vision that he had to have. The vitalurgic fluid that was herself. And when her strength was gone? When she died out there? Ah, then perhaps Ed would find his own.

Time did not move, it did not creep forward on its horizontal, fatal course. It became still, perpendicular. They held it back a moment, a priceless boon, between them. Their silence grew, became a shining shape not to be touched, not even breathed upon by words. More and more it was like this now as the time grew short. That was the cost. The pure, strong happiness mounted. It was one feeling, in both she knew identical, and it washed over them like the tides that rise and engulf the sleepers enlaced upon the sand. Dimly, away off on the shores of talk and thought was an idea. Perhaps later, when speech returned, she might say: There is this, belovèd, how can we ask for more?

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STRAWS IN THE WIND

Significant notes in American life today

ENJOYING THE DEPRESSION *By Grace Nies Fletcher*

Going into gingham for the woman of 1932 has proved hardly less exciting than going into khaki in 1917. Nor is the woman who had too much leisure the only one who is finding the present-day emergencies a challenge. There are many men who are enjoying the depression; just as there were many who enjoyed the late war (if a war may be called "late" which, though officially dead and buried, persists in sending up so many new green shoots of trouble from an uneasy grave), because they have been catapulted out of the old ruts into which life had frozen.

We are such a very young nation, so recently turned from the plough of the pioneer, that our ladies of leisure have hardly had time to find out how to be lazy gracefully, how to make a business of it as they do on the Continent. The members of the new generation of opulence might take up their time with *affaires de cœur,* but they had to have a great deal of liquor to help them; they might join a hunt club but could hardly bring themselves to feel that chasing a fox twice a week across a few country hedges was, as in England, a reasonable excuse for existence.

So when, for the first time since the war, the American wife of the man of formerly comfortable income found that her services were actually needed, she rushed home from her course on how to save the world in ten lectures and into the nursery and kitchen. And there was a smile on her lips that said silently, "I knew these men couldn't get along without me for long!" Once again she was to be an important economic factor in the home. Why shouldn't she like it?

One woman whose husband, formerly very wealthy, is now watching the nickels, gave up her second maid; and since the cook turned up her nose at doing the family washing, the wife herself is running the washing machine . . . and enjoying it.

"It saves me doing my reducing exercises," she explains. "And I have something to show for my efforts besides grunts and groans. And oh, the peace there is now below stairs! It hardly seems like home with no disputes to settle in the kitchen. For if cook gets grumpy, I can leave her alone to sulk; she can hardly argue with the dishpan!"

Part of this cheerfulness is due, of course, to the assurances which the wife finds shrieking in every newspaper and magazine that the depression cannot last forever, as one woman who has always had to do her own washing and probably always will, rather acidly pointed out. Nevertheless, many a family which is hard put to it to stretch out the bread and buttter, today is enjoying a new solidity. So long as the financial drop has not been great enough to drive the mother out of the home to earn a part of the family expenses, there is small question that the depression has drawn the average family closer together; has given it a common aim vital to all its members. The ten-year-old son of one real-estate broker whose business at present resembles one of Aunt Jemima's pancakes, recently put a dollar into his father's hand. "I earned it," he said proudly, "for *us.*" That boy's dollar didn't go to the bootlegger; it went to the butcher, and the boy paid it out himself. He and his father have formed a working partnership which they talk over gravely at night, while the mother sews in front of the radio.

A mid-Victorian picture? Perhaps . . . if you substitute a piano for the radio. But comfortable. Now that they can't afford to keep up the pace any more, many middle-aged parents who used to think it necessary to dress as if they were twenty and to radiate the high spirits of eighteen in order to be counted in among the moderns, are finding it a relief to be their age. The fact is, the "after-the-war younger generation" is at last growing up. Youth used to be at such a premium they hardly dared to. Young men were rushed into positions of business responsibility without sobering experience, simply because they were young and full of vigor. Now that the financial balloon is burst, people are beginning to wonder if perhaps there isn't a place for the older man's poise and long-range viewpoint. And this is a healthy sign. For after these past three years (and how many more?) are over even our young business men may be called experienced. Certainly they have been through the highest ups and the lowest downs credible. So if the financial stringency has squelched the gaiety of youth, it has also given a new understanding that life must be lived in perspective, in yesday and tomorrow, as well as today.

In spite of the worries that beset every business man today, this letting down of the high tension of living has proven a relief to many families which were always straining after a larger income, a bigger and better front, always getting ready to live. As one business man puts it:

"Keeping up with the Joneses has gone out of style. I no longer have to buy my wife a new electric icebox because the neighbors have a bigger one. Nor do we need to invest in a new car because the newest models in dashboard vanity cases are out. Instead I say to Jones, 'My Essex has gone 35,000 miles. What has your Packard done?'"

It may be hard on the manufacturers, and on business in general for the time being, for the American family to wear things out for a change; but it certainly eases up the nervous tension in the home. "I'm not going to hoard nor refuse to buy necessities nor even luxuries for my family; but neither am I going to buy something new just because it is new" is a frequent comment. Will it be such a bad thing for business in the long run if we get things because we need them and not merely because of high-pressure salesmanship? May it not thus become easier to estimate how many carpet sweepers and eggbeaters

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to make, without this "overproduction" which all the economists are wagging their heads over as the root of all evil? From the humble point of view of a practical housewife managing a budget, it would seem that way. At any rate, certain it is that with a comfortable sigh like that of our grandmothers when they let out their corset strings of an evening, the great American public, in spite of vanished paper profits, is settling down to being itself.

There is small doubt, however, that many who are "enjoying the depression" are pushing this attitude of non-buying too far: they are simply playing a new game in which it is fashionable to be poor. "I used to be the only one in our crowd who didn't have any money," remarked one young woman as she deftly cut the cards at the bridge table, "but now nobody has any money . . . or at least you'd think so to hear them talk. It's nice to be in the swim for once!" And because we Americans are like the little girl who had the little curl, when we're up we're very very up, and when we're down we're buried, these new economizers often go to unwarranted and ridiculous extremes. Not satisfied with shunning the fashionable clubs, they must go to the sub-sub basement for lunch, broadcasting their fifteen-cent sandwich.

"It makes me furious," said the wife of a young professional man who has had to cut corners all her married life, "to see some of these new-poor women, who know it won't last, actually wallowing in penury. They're getting such a great kick out of being martyrs! They reduce their maids' wages whether they have to or not simply because they know they can get away with it. They buy a cheap hat and then beam, 'Don't you love it? And it only cost $1.98!' As if it took any courage to be dowdy when it's stylish! But it takes real grit to wear a $1.98 hat when every one *isn't* doing it."

Anything to be in the social procession . . . even if it's over the hill to the poorhouse! There is something even a little pathetic about the woman with the luxury hang-over, trying to get in touch with the times, who orders out her limousine to go over to the cash-and-carry store for her groceries. But so long as she pays her chauffeur's salary, what does it matter if she gets a new thrill out of carrying brown-paper parcels and having the English footman say snootily, as I heard one do recently when he tendered a large feathery parcel, "Madame, the carrots!"

But right beside the car of the woman who was trying to "keep down with the Joneses," walked another pleasant-faced woman carrying a brown-paper bag too. Her husband really had lost a great deal of money, but neither of them was crying about it. Nor had they shut up their hospitable doors as so many people have at the cry of hard times. They went right on having their friends in and entertaining: only the wife quietly went out into the kitchen and cooked her own pork and beans for the guests. There was plenty of conversation to take the place of expensive cocktails. So that people all over Detroit began to stand in line, hoping to be invited to one of these pork-and-bean dinners.

But women are not the only ones who are enjoying the depression. It was a great relief to many misfit and incompetent men when losing your job lost its social opprobrium. As in 1917 you could give up your incongenial desk or adding machine to go into khaki, so today you can join the army of the great unemployed and get sympathy instead of suspicion. The burden of proof is no longer on the unemployed to show he is not to blame; that is taken for granted. It is casting no reproach upon the millions of wage earners thrown out of work through no fault of their own, to say that many of the men who are unemployed today would have been so anyway because they either couldn't or wouldn't do their jobs. These are the men who are boasting how much they lost or how long they have been looking for a job. They are the despair of agencies and friends because down underneath they really enjoy being the centre of sympathy and attention. It is this army of incompetents, making capital out of the depression, who make the task of the really capable man, looking for a job, doubly difficult.

Another depression profiteer who is enjoying himself hugely is the employer beyond middle age, who has somehow managed to survive financially, and can at last deliver his oration upon the time "when I was a boy I knew how to save" to an audience which may squirm but has to listen . . . if he wants a job. The theory of this newly rampant employer, although equally fallacious, is the exact opposite of that of the youthful years before the depression when because a man was young he got a chance: for he believes that age itself, when attached to enough money, is intrinsically infallible. This lucky bore is today the monarch of the labor market which he has always hankered to be. He can scatter his largess with all the gestures of an oriental potentate . . . and pay the man worth $200 a week the salary he used to give his stenographer. Then having cut his employees' wages from 50 to 60 per cent (with a cost of living that has dropped only approximately 15 per cent since 1919), he shouts with ironical patriotism, "Buy! Buy!" "Sure," replied one embittered employee, "but with what?"

Another pet broadcast of this sort of profiteer is that "a man who really wants to work should be willing to do anything." He may be willing, but can he? The idea that there is any economic waste in turning an electrical engineer into a street-car conductor never seems to occur to such comfortable capitalists. Like the army which in 1918 delighted to set a college professor to digging ditches and put the garbage collector to stirring the soup, he enjoys taking advantage of the economic pressure to insist upon a man accepting a job for which he is obviously unfitted or else being branded as a slacker. As if breaking a man's nerve or self-respect by certain failure in a job, unsuitable both physically and psychologically, were something too trivial to think about.

Yet these human values are exactly the things which the thinking business man is coming to see he must consider, if not only labor but the buying market as a whole is to be stabilized. The most cheerful aspect of the past three years lies in this very fact . . . that business tyranny, machine efficiency, have been proven no longer self-sufficient. Not only "the public be damned" but also "labor be damned" is rapidly going out of style as a business policy . . . because labor and the buying public are proving perilously synonymous.

Pleading with the public to start the

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wheels of business turning by even sacrificial buying is not only an economic measure but a human appeal, not to a machine, but to a thinking, co-operating individual. Unemployment and old-age insurance, planning an all-the-year-round income for the factory worker by filling his idle days with farm work, trying to cut down the shift of white-collar labor from place to place so that the American home may again take root: all these panaceas for our modern ills are being discussed gravely by business men, not college professors. The value of the home and of man as a person are no longer mere *x* and *y* in a theoretical equation: the practical business man is testing out social values in his own laboratory. The very fact that the deflation has been so widespread, hitting alike the millionaire and his barber, the white-collar bank clerk and the man in the blue jumper, has contributed to this saner point of view.

"It has been good for the thrifty to get a bump along with the careless," remarked one thoughtful business man who had to take a reef in his financial sails. "The highhopping grasshopper expects to get frost bitten . . . but not the smug ant! Now we who prided ourselves on being ants are finding that besides thrift we need understanding."

This philosophy is not new: it is merely a sign that young America is growing up . . . that the average American home is enjoying the depression in the same sense that Mark Twain wrote to his wife after his bankruptcy how "blithe" he was! Paine quotes him as saying to his wife, who was in Europe, waiting not only for passage home but for money to live from day to day:

"Except when I think of you, dear heart . . . then I am not blithe, for I seem to see you grieving and ashamed, dreading to look people in the face. For in the thick of the fight there is cheer. You only seem to see rout, retreat, and dishonored colors dragging in the dust . . . whereas none of these things exist. There is temporary defeat, but no dishonor . . . and we will march again."

NOW THAT I NO LONGER BELIEVE *By John Richelsen*

When Paul of Tarsus was placed on trial before the Council of Jerusalem for his defection from orthodox Judaism, he insisted on reminding his judges that he himself had formerly been one of them, a Pharisee and the son of a Pharisee.

Merely to qualify as having some acquaintance with the Christian religion, the writer volunteers the information that he had been a Presbyterian minister in active service for twenty-eight years, is the son of a Presbyterian minister, and as his equivalent for sitting at the feet of a Gamaliel he presents his diploma of graduation from that straitest of all sectarian institutions, Princeton Theological Seminary. Bloomfield Theological Seminary crowned him with a Doctorate of Divinity.

That I have renounced the religion of Jesus is not heralded by me as if it were of any particular importance to any one. Certainly no attack on Christianity is to be launched here. Stinging arguments against one who has openly forsaken Christianity can readily be marshalled and they are entitled to their full force, with a dash of scorn added if desired. But among the reasons for attempting to discredit this particular defection from the faith there should not be included an assumption that the writer had no intimate knowledge of that which he has renounced.

Interesting experiences have come to me now that I no longer believe. Outstanding among them are the expressions of certainty from my friends that they would immediately plunge themselves into courses of utmost wickedness if they shared my unbelief.

"Tell me, now," I am asked, "just what are your conclusions regarding religion?"

"Simply and frankly stated," I reply, "I no longer believe in the existence of a personal God, nor do I believe there is any reasonable basis for a faith in personal immortality. Jesus is no longer a source of authority for me."

"Well!" is the frequent gasp of an answer. "If I thought as you do, I would go out and"—there follow varied lists of dire iniquities immediately to become engaged in. The degree and extent of these departures from righteousness are, of course, conditioned by the age, intelligence, temperament, and so forth, of the speaker. The average of the sins enumerated, however, usually simmers down to the rather commonplace old-fashioned vehicles of general hell-raising.

Before such an abyss of degradation thus pictured to me I am supposed to stand aghast. Also it is frequently intimated that I should consider myself partly responsible in the eventuality of my listener cutting loose and taking the leap into such depths. But as an argument for the credibility of the Christian religion, the fact that a monogamist might become a free-lance lover, or a teetotaler a souse, were it not for his faith, does not carry weight with me as a satisfying proof of the existence of God or the immortality of the human soul.

I have become unsold on the proposition that the Christian religion is the sole preservative of individual integrity and the only guarantee for a decent society. Men seem to have surprisingly little confidence in their inherent integrity. If I concurred in their misgivings of themselves I would need to think of them as just being on the verge of becoming murderers, adulterers, thieves, and drunkards. Sometimes they talk as if they thought they were making a sacrifice for religion's sake in not being such. If the religious leash snapped, would the majority of men immediately set out to become destroyers of others and of themselves? It is my opinion that if the ties were cut the former believers would turn around once or twice, yawn, go back to their habitats and take an afternoon nap. Nothing ferocious or even very interesting would develop.

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A man may justly resent gratuitous attacks on his religious faith, but likewise is a man entitled to become resentful over a gratuitous attack on his lack of religious faith. If some men wish to persist in the opinion that they would go to pot without their faith, who am I to say them nay? But it is another matter for them to assume that all who do not share their faith must be morally inferior to them and that if such deficiency is not readily patent in such unbelievers it is only because of their ability to hide their true characters.

Morals in Philistia are not different from what I had found them to be in Canaan. Many unbelievers do not consider it a privilege to be immoral and they deliberately neglect their opportunities to be so. Citizens of Canaan and of Philistia congregate on our streets and in our business places and it is difficult to distinguish between them. Any one's circle of acquaintances must be very circumscribed if it does not include both believers and unbelievers. It is here submitted that if there should be division of men into categories of sheep and goats, Christianity does not constitute the dividing line between them.

Another interesting experience has been the unanimity of commiseration poured out on me regardless of my protestations of self-will and deliberate determination. To patriots of the Promised Land I seem to have condemned myself to the lonely existence of the permanent exile—without God and without hope in the world. No amount of denial or dissent avails me. I am pitied because I must be sad—whether I know it or not.

When I first realized that my intellectual processes were guiding my footsteps across the frontiers of Christian faith, I own to a faltering of the heart at the prospect of an emptiness of life. I dreaded the expected nostalgia and the consequent loss of interest in what was left for me. Today I wonder over such misgivings. It should have been clear to me that having no expectations of a life to come I would be more than ever interested in the life that now is. Certainly such has come to be the case.

Unquestionably, after one has lost faith in a hereafter, one must become gradually acclimated to the changed viewpoint regarding the present world. But the adjustment brings a new appreciation of the beauty of this earth and of this life. If I were still believing that this world is a thoroughly wicked place in which I had but a temporary abiding as a pilgrim and a stranger walking through a vale of tears, it were wicked for me to wish to prolong my stay here or take pleasure in my being here. If I still believed that man had once been good for a little while and then went bad, and that now he must always be a degenerate till finally this earth perishes, any vital interest in human progress would be impossible to me.

It isn't necessary to be blind to the deficiencies of man before one may think well of him. Man may be viewed as if his heart were desperately wicked, every son of Adam conceived in sin and born in iniquity, unable ever to work out his salvation, forever barred from Eden, under wrath and curse, doomed: or one may see man striving, struggling, advancing, conquering; still slipping, still lacking, still failing; yet always better than before, always more promising. A real optimism, or at least hopefulness, supplants the old pessimism of a damned race.

The new viewpoint creates buoyancy of spirit. I want to live because I like this world and it is the only one I shall know. I am more interested in man than I was before. I am thrilled over the possibilities of human progress and achievement. Soon, I believe, man will find how he may very greatly prolong his life on this planet, how distribute the earth's bounties equitably, how take advantage of the possibilities of this whole universe.

My mind is occupied with the conceptions of self-created matter, as mystifying and incomprehensible as the idea of a self-created God. I know less than I used to think I knew, but feel surer about what is left; and I dare let my curiosity be piqued without having taboos to hem me in with anathemas. Men of like mind with me, I find, are contributing toward making this world more comfortable with their inventions and research work in physics and biochemistry. We are thinking of atoms instead of angels, and find the atoms more interesting.

In what I have here felt free to say concerning my own experiences as an unbeliever, I have studiously sought to avoid the necessity for swapping tradelasts with believers. Even if, in my judgment, Christians are self-deceived in their hopes and assumptions, I have no evangelical zeal left for the task of attempting to convert anybody to anything.

My only desire to work for the disillusionment of Christians might arise from the conviction that, because Christian philosophy is necessarily pessimistic concerning this world and its glories, it is quite impossible to get as much cooperation for the achievement of human advancement as would result if they who are Christians became convinced that here on this earth is the only theatre for their Heaven.

KETCHED SETTIN'

By John Fort

KETCHED settin' on a little rise,
My piece hit spoke arter a squirrel.
I ain't seed no revenooers
Coming by the low gap.
I ain't seed no smoke of a still
Coming outen the ivy bed.
I ain't seed no paths leadin' to the still house
'Cept them made by critters
And dumb brutes.
I ain't see'd no men run outen the gulch.
I ain't made a sound
To warn them who was at the still.
We'uns was wantin' fresh meat—
I were jest settin' on a little rise and unthoughted
My piece hit spoke arter a squirrel
Settin' on a red gum
Nigh to seventy yards away.
I ain't done nothin'
More'n being ketched settin'.

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LIFE IN THE UNITED STATES

A Radical Childhood

By Rion Bercovici

Atheism, anarchism, and vegetarianism were the Holy Trinity of my childhood. I dreamed of the day when the red-uniformed army of "The Revolution" would conquer New York. General of this force, my headquarters would be in the Forty-second Street Library, from whose porticoes the length of Fifth Avenue could be raked by field artillery. Too young to belong to the Industrial Workers of the World ("I. W. W."), I looked upon that organization with the same admiration that a British schoolboy has for the crack Guards regiments. I whistled their stirring tunes, memorized the historic preamble beginning, "The working class and the employing class have nothing in common . . ."

I was not quite nine years old when my parents aided in founding the Ferrer School in New York, an institution honoring the memory of Francisco Ferrer, who died before a firing-squad in Montjuich, Spain, for advocating secular education in that then Catholic land. My younger brother and myself were sent to the school, which occupied a brownstone house in downtown New York.

The Ferrer School was more than just a radical educational institution. It was a centre of propaganda. In and out of its hospitable doors came and went "I. W. W.'s," Anarchists, Socialists and other malcontents.

Among the saints who brought life and color to my belief was William D. ("Big Bill") Haywood, leader of the Industrial Workers of the World. His cyclopean face, one eye shrouded in black, his bulky form, bearish walk, were familiar to us. Patting the students benignly on the head, "Big Bill" approved of the school. We waited anxiously for his visits. We knew he had lost the eye in a strike. He was our hero.

There were about a dozen pupils enrolled when the school started, three of which were my brother, my cousin, and I. The rest were children of professional people or artists, most of them concerned with the founding of the school, and glad to have such an institution in which to place children that otherwise might have been contaminated by the capitalistic virus of the public schools.

Will Durant, beardless and not yet the salesman of philosophy, was our first teacher. When we learned that Durant had abjured his monastical vows in Canada to enter the radical movement he acquired a mysterious aura. An ex-monk was a person of glamor. Lola Ridge, the poetess, was at the school about the same time as Durant, but fulfilled the specialized functions of frying bananas and telling charming stories.

"Cannibalism" was Durant's invention. We chased him about a fire in the back yard. The pupil who caught the teacher had the right to burn his clothes. The few times Durant was caught he bought us off with bribes of bananas.

The rational teaching of sex was also Durant's concern.

"Boys and girls," he said one afternoon, standing before a huge blackboard, "watch me, I am now drawing an arrow. I am now drawing a little egg. The arrow represents the male spirit, the egg represents the female spirit. Do you all understand?

"The arrows are very active and lively. The eggs are lazy and just wait for the arrows. If only one of the arrows pierces the egg a child is started. Do you understand?

"It's all so simple, the arrow and the egg are the secrets of life.

An ex-Catholic boy was dissatisfied.

"If that's true," he demanded, "how did the Virgin Mary bear Jesus without being near a man? She was only visited by the Holy Ghost."

Durant frowned. Then his brow cleared as he drew a diagram on the blackboard and he sailed into another explanation of that much-discussed miracle.

Will Durant left us to continue his popularizing career by lecturing to the "working masses" on eternal truths at the old Labor Temple on Second Avenue. He was followed by John Coryell, the small, wiry originator of the "Nick Carter" stories and "True Story Magazine," and Mrs. Coryell, a dignified, high-principled woman. The Coryells never became part of the crowd, never gave us a spirit of play that we had been given by Durant. They were too serious. Mr. Coryell refused to tell us Nick Carter stories. He was ashamed of the one phase of his life that interested us. He also suppressed our more gory games, on the grounds that they were "too bourgeoise."

There was a girl at school known as "Ruth the Beaut, She has a Gold Tooth." We cornered the poor infant, slapped her, pinched her, kicked her, sang her name-song till she burst into frantic tears. We looked upon her gold tooth as evidence of capitalism, coming to this belief through our own interpretation of a lecture on the evil of gold.

Humanitarianism was a serious preoccupation. Frank, our silent and moody Lithuanian janitor, with the long-nosed face of a mediæval peasant, had killed our pet cat when it developed some incurable disease.

Shouting, "Frank the Crank has kill-

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ed the cat," we danced before and behind the bewildered man. He threw sticks and coals at us. The school rang with the shouts of "Frank the Crank has killed the cat." We wrote that legend on the class blackboards. We painted it on the fence, chalked it on the steps. The school officials were with Frank. It had become an issue of authority: revolution within a revolution. The school authorities told us that Frank had been right, the cat had been sick, a menace to us all. Didn't we want Frank to earn a living for himself and his children? We only saw the horrible picture a girl-witness had painted for us in her hysterical words: Frank holding the squirming cat on a log and chopping its head off with an axe. Frank had to go and Frank lost his job.

Vegetarianism was a family religion, though a similar faith was shared by some of my fellow-pupils at the Ferrer School. My parents had been vegetarians for the first nine years of my life. Then they backslid, albeit reluctantly, still "believing in vegetarian principles," and eating meat only a few times a week. In such a world of faith and principle, there were people who ate meat with the same intense conviction we brought to the mastication of spinach. One night a serious-minded meat-eater was the family dinner guest. He had labored often and in vain to show us the error of our ways. Such contradiction was not relished, and we decided to teach him a lesson. We chopped some worms up fine and sneaked them into the stew simmering on the kitchen stove.

"If you like meat" I said, after the meal was over, "it will make you feel better to know that we put worms in the stew!"

My younger brother and sister laughed in delight. We waited for praise. To our consternation, we were scolded by our mother. We never worried about the fate of the poor worms, sacrifices on the altar of vegetarianism.

The summer following my attendance at the Ferrer School I was a pupil for a few months in the type of "Little Red Schoolhouse" made famous in song and story. The banality of the place disgusted me. No discussions on sex and the revolution, no rioting, no excitement. . . . The only interests of the school were concentrated in the playing of baseball, and the collection of picture cards of actresses and baseball players.

When I was about ten years old, we moved to Montreal. The educational system of that city was divided between Protestant and Catholic institutions, as the town itself was divided between the English and the French-Canadians. I attended a "Protestant" school.

The first morning in Mount Royal School I went down to the Assembly Room for "Flag Allegiance," a ceremony like the one held in United States schools. I could not lift my hand to salute the "Union Flag," with its British Union Jack in one corner of the red field, balanced by the Canadian shield and maple leaf. I grew indignant over the discovery that the tune of "God Save the King" had been stolen from "My Country, 'tis of Thee," a song which had never interested me before. The words of the songs stuck in my mouth. I could not sing.

After the exercises, recess period followed in the big stone-flagged yard.

"Dirty Yank!" I heard. As I turned around, a blow on the ear knocked me down. "Damn Yankee!" and my nose was pouring blood. As I tried to defend myself I was thrown to the ground by patriotic lads, who kicked and punched me in the name of the Union Jack and maple leaf.

"Doctor Paul wants to see you," my teacher told me sternly as I reported to my room, face bloody, clothing torn.

The principal, a crisp, hard Scotchman, turned cold blue eyes upon me, eyes that did not seem to notice my damaged appearance. The flicker of a smile played on his thin lips, and I fancied he smiled with approval for the actions of his patriotic pupils.

"Now, my boy," he said, "you have committed a terrible sin, one of the worst in Mount Royal history. Since this is the first time, I will just put your name down in the punishment book. Next time . . ."

He looked significantly at a little motor, which worked a large, iron-tipped ruler with inhumanly regular pressure. This apparatus was known as "the beating machine" in the school.

Next morning, I saluted the Union Flag, raised my voice in the strains of "God Save the King," "Rule, Britannia," and "Canada, my Canada." Revolt, however, smouldered in my heart. I was against every man, and every man's hands were against me. I hated the school, Canada, King George, the British Empire. A feeling of loyalty to the Stars and Stripes possessed me.

In history class, I learned of the American revolution from a new angle. The traitorous Americans, at best misguided, had leagued with the savage Indians and perfidious French against the loving motherland. Brave "Loyalists" had been tarred and feathered, forced to leave their native land. The Americans assumed in my mind the characteristics of the brave members of the "I. W. W." George Washington and Ethan Allen joined Bill Haywood and Francisco Ferrer in my personal Valhalla.

Horace Traubel, portly, gray-bearded editor of *The Conservator,* visited our home. Ardent disciple of Walt Whitman, he brought a new saint to my hierarchy. My family, isolated from New York, reminisced in a home-sick manner of their friends, Jack London, Emma Goldman, Alexander Berkman, Carlo Tresca, and others. Memory of this, scraps of the conversation, were inner refuge from the strident Canadianism of school and playtime.

Dissatisfaction with the schooling caused my mother to take my younger brother, sister, and me to France, the land of my birth. There, she was determined to find the "right kind of school."

My mother's preliminary investigations kept us a few weeks in Paris, where we visited relatives. I met a cousin of about my age, Emile, a fervent Frenchman. In France I was neither American nor Canadian. I was an international revolutionist, belonging to a super-nation that transcended borderlines.

"I am a Frenchman," said Emile proudly, "and you Americans are not even civilized. You were born in this country. Why don't you become a French citizen?"

"But, Emile, my dear cousin," I pleaded, "can't you see that you are only a Frenchman by accident? Suppose you had been born in America?"

"I am a Frenchman," repeated Emile, and I promptly hit him on the jaw.

Though I won the fight, Emile had the last word: "Only an uncivilized American would fight this way. I am a Frenchman."

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My mother nested her free and troublesome brood on the grounds of a beautiful chateau a few hours from Paris, that had once been the home of a mistress of King Louis the Fourteenth, but was now the site of a radical boarding-school.

"Hands up, we have a real American with us!" the children would shout, frightening the townsmen as they paraded about the streets with me. My fellow pupils insisted on detailed information about the Indians and cowboys that roamed the streets of New York. I supplied them with this information. While a little more disciplined than in the Ferrer School, the children here were much the same type of radicals, coming from professional and artistic families.

Everything would have been fine. "L'Internationale" had the same tune as "The International," and that pleased me. I got along with the pupils. However, there was a religious complication. My brother, sister and I were the only vegetarians in the place. My sister stayed in the girls' dormitory, so I did not share her woes. My younger brother, more politic than I, abandoned his vegetable love. I fought on.

The head of the school, a tall, thin ex-priest, with burning black eyes, was as fanatical in his anti-vegetarianism as I was in my vegetarianism. He argued with me night and day. Suspicious of his zeal, I refused to touch any food but chocolate, eggs, and bread. As an object lesson in the necessity of taking life, the schoolman killed a rabbit by hitting it on the head with his closed fist before my eyes. I hated him intensely. As eggs became more and more nauseating, I wrote frantic letters to my mother in Paris.

She sent us to another school, which was only a small unit of a huge Communist colony, "La Ruche" (The Beehive), at Creteil-sur-Marne, a suburb of Paris. Still spreading misinformation about Indians, cowboys, and buffaloes, I made myself at home.

The Communists were divided into two camps, the vegetarians and the "carnivores." While the adults were good-natured in their rivalry, the children were ferocious. Separate eating quarters and kitchens were maintained for the battling groups. The more aggressive carnivores would often send us a big cut of bloody meat, or the dismembered body of a boar. Our dining-room was not infrequently decorated with realistic pictures of bleeding animals. We children met in pitched battles after such overt acts, egged on by the adults.

The unofficial "dean" of the colony was a venerable French painter, Nicot, a red-bearded blue-eyed giant, who took a liking to the American importations. He had his own ideas of radical education, and took us on visits to French political prisons, where many of his comrades were immured. The political prisons were distinct from the criminal sections of the jails. They were almost like hotels. Prisoners received food and gifts from their friends, and were treated politely and "Sirred" by the guards. The anarchists good-naturedly threatened the guards with throat-slitting when the "revolution" would arrive.

Bithot, the head of "La Ruche," was a squat, fanatical printer, very much like Benjamin Franklin in appearance and manner. Spartan in his tastes, he expressed his vehement disapproval of the waste involved in a picture card sent him by a lady friend in a ten-page letter that cost double the postage of the card.

Nicot one day took me to a nudist cult not far away, which occupied its own island in the Seine. When we rowed over from the mainland, I was surprised to be met by a few white-robed figures. However, once within the wood-fringed island, the robes came off. Before a huge camp-fire, the nudists, or "Naturists," as they called themselves, danced and sang. There were about forty men, women, and children, led by a tall, black-bearded patriarch, who argued loudly with Nicot, asserting that "Naturism" would cure the ills of mankind. Nicot fought for Communism. The colonists gathered about me in admiration when they learned I had never eaten meat. My survival—and I was fat, black-eyed, and smiling—gave them heart to go on. To most of them vegetarianism, recently acquired, was a difficult cult.

Marching troops from a near-by military camp, ceaseless overhead whirr of hundreds of planes, visits to the colony of detectives, and uniformed gendarmes, presaged war. We left France just before actual hostilities, stopping only a few days in Paris while waiting for our boat.

Just over eleven years old now, I attended country schoolhouse in Croton-on-the-Hudson, New York. Croton was then an embryonic artistic and radical colony. Elizabeth Duncan, sister of Isadora, had a school there. John Reed, Max Eastman, Ralph Waldo Trine, Hiram Motherwell, Boardman Robinson, Courtney Lemon, Louise Bryant, and others lived in Croton. Mabel Dodge, millionaire patroness of the arts, owned an estate bordering on our little patch of earth.

This artistic and radical population had no effect on the pupils or teachers of the red brick school I attended. Sons of Irish and German laborers and farmers dominated the school. When they learned I had just come from France, a fact revealed by my bastard accent, the pupils proceeded to battle me as a representative of the Allies, for whose cause I was thus impressed.

Emile's father had gone to war and been killed. Other relatives of ours in France and England had died or been wounded. The war became real to me, but I was still anarchist. Russia and its Czar I hated vehemently, modelling a clay statuette of a big woman holding up the dismembered head of Czar Nicholas. School persecution fired my Allied sympathies.

Mabel Dodge's estate was a magic place for me. The constant flow of guests, music, dance, the generous supply of saddle horses and food, fascinated me. I was very friendly with John Evans, Mrs. Dodge's son. Other friends of mine were Bayard Boyeson, whom I remembered from the Ferrer School. He became associated with that institution after being dismissed from Columbia University for the crime of talking on the same platform as Emma Goldman. Maurice Sterne, the painter, was another friend. From afar I admired Robert Edmond Jones, the scenic designer, who walked about attired in a tigerskin.

John Evans had the dubious distinction of being the only male pupil attending Elizabeth Duncan's school, where the costume *de rigueur* was a flowing white Grecian robe and classic sandals. Dressed in this outfit, John

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dashed about on his swift red motorcycle, puffing furiously at a fat cigar. John Evans eventually left the school to resume his natural character, working on a ranch in Colorado as a cowboy.

John Reed, who had written the preface to my father's first published book, was seldom seen in Croton. I heard vaguely of his adventures in Russia and the Near East, where he had travelled with Boardman Robinson, the artist, who also lived in Croton, where Reed maintained a cottage. Boardman Robinson, tall, and with booming voice, had a beard that flamed like a woodfire. Max Eastman, bland, smooth, and handsome, was another hero of the Croton days. He was editor of *The Masses,* in constant trouble with the Post Office and Government, and fought a wicked game of tennis.

A "New Thought" colony was one of the features of Croton life about which I agreed with my non-radical schoolmates. When we learned that meals cost fifty cents and "fasting lessons" delivered by an Indian Swami cost a dollar, we paraded in and out of the colony singing this charming ditty:

"New Thought is Bum Thought,
Bum Thought is New Thought,
A dollar a lesson for fasting,
And fifty cents for lunch!"

While at Croton, I broke up the monotony by visiting the single-tax colony of "Free Acres," at Scotch Plains, New Jersey, founded by Bolton Hall. I was the guest of an uncle of mine who lived there. I was surprised, but not shocked when the whole family—my uncle, aunt, cousin, and I—went bathing "nude" in a stream behind the house. My aunt was tall and young-looking, and I could not keep my eyes from her slim, well-built body. After the second day's bathing, however, rather to my surprise, I did not feel the impulse of looking. I must have been about twelve when a young lady artist of Free Acres asked me to pose for her in the nude. This proposal shocked me, though I myself had drawn and modelled from the nude in art schools in New York and Montreal. I could imagine posing for a group. But to be alone in a room, naked, with a female stranger. . . . That was too much!

Returning to New York, we were visited by "Big Bill" Haywood, out on bail prior to his jump to Russia. "Big Bill's" visit caused our letter box to be picked, and put our house under constant surveillance of plain-clothes men, a fact which thrilled me. Big Bill was drunk, inert on our landing, and four men struggled to raise this human monolith. This scene became, for me, part of the Haywood saga.

A glittering and enigmatic figure to me was Frank Harris, whom I met in his offices at the old *Pearson's Magazine*. Small, neat, he wore a checked vest and 1890 clothes, stock tie, button shoes, white carnation. For no reason at all that I could discern, except one of helpfulness to youth, he told me that if I succeeded in raising half a million dollars in cash, he would be willing to share the secrets of immense gold deposits in Alaska. I know that he was serious, as, years later, I heard of the same offer made to one of our leading millionaires.

Radicalism seething within me, dreams of revolutions and barricades, I entered De Witt Clinton High School, New York, an institution containing about six thousand city lads. I could not affiliate with the school radicals. They were too political-minded for me. The "YPSLS" (members of the Young People's Socialist League) were too smug. The others were too dirty. They were uninterested in my chief concern, personal freedom.

In temporary reaction I formed a Royalist Fraternity, under Sanskrit letters, to avoid the official ban on Greek-Letter Fraternities. We called ourselves "Vina Sasarak Cinta" (Without Earthly Cares), and met in the cavernous depths of one of the Egyptian tombs of Karnak in the Metropolitan Museum of Art till stopped by a guard. The Royalist phase lasted only a few months, but was an interesting bit of color in the radical pattern of my life.

Following the collapse of Royalism, I began to conceive a violent hatred for the white race, particularly for the Anglo-Saxons. I was sorry I was not Japanese or Negro, so that I could put the paleskins in their place.

A little work for the High School paper and magazine convinced me of my mission. I would flounder no longer, I would be a radical journalist. I thought of John Reed, Frank Harris, Emile Zola, Jean Juares. What went on at school, socially and scholastically, had little relation to the seething world within me. Only in radical journalism would I find the balance I needed.

I must have been about sixteen when I was introduced, in a summer vacation period, to Louis Baury, city editor of the New York *Call*. The result was a job as reporter on the New York *Call*.

My first assignment was the covering of a street lecture by one of the editors of *The Call,* whom I only knew as "Mac," whose hobby it was to run for office on the Socialist ticket. Stuffing wads of papers and three newly sharpened pencils in my pockets, I went that night to the corner of Ninety-Sixth Street and Broadway, where the ground slopes sharply to the river.

Before "Mac" arose on the step-ladder to start his talk, the other street corners were full. A "Free Hindu" speaker had one angle of the eloquent square; "Free Ireland" had another corner; and the Salvation Army (plus band) had the corner directly opposite us. As our speaker started his impassioned plea, noisy police motorcycles cut up and down, letting out their exhausts, careening perilously near the zealous audience. To add to the joy, a few bricks rained down from the roofs above. Just as "Mac" got a fair swing into his oratory he was drowned by the blare of the Salvation Army band.

I was framing a "hot lead" that would cause the city editor to admire my descriptive powers when the speaker threw agonized looks in my direction. I went over to the ladder. A stream of water was coming downhill at a rapid pace. Four husky and loyal Socialists were holding the ladder, and "Mac" was looking below him at the rushing whirlpool, overflowing the bounds of the gutter. One of the loyal ladder-holders asked me to trace the flow of water, so that complaint could be made to the city authorities.

Looking upon this as a task worthy of my journalistic enterprise, I followed the water around corners, uphill, till I reached an open fire station. From a hydrant near the firehouse water was belching forth.

Brazenly, I walked into the station, and saw a few blue-shirted firemen

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spitting tobacco juice and trying to convert ordinary chairs into rockers.

"Say," I shouted, "what's the idea of the water? Trying to drown the Socialist? He's got permission. . . ."

The firemen just listened, then a bulky suspendered fellow spit some tobacco juice near my shoes.

"Hey you," he said, "who do you think you are? The editor of *The Times?*"

I looked him full in the eyes.

"No," I said, with dignity, "I am not the editor of *The Times*. I am a reporter on the New York *Daily Call!*"

I was sprawling on the sidewalk, and the firehouse door was closed. I felt the seat of my trousers for a possible tear, picked myself up heroically, and limped to Socialist field headquarters.

I told my story to "Mac," who immediately incorporated it in his speech as an example of the nefarious tricks of the Capitalists. Speech or no speech, water came rushing down. The loyal party workers were having a hard time keeping the ladder and its shouting freight from floating downhill. I thought of what a wonderful story I would be able to write if "Mac" was carried down into the Hudson by the flood, and drowned.

Suddenly, thinking of that, the whole business struck me as ludicrous: The pushing waters, the men holding the ladder, the speaker looking fearfully at the ground while shouting, "You have only your chains to lose and a world to gain. . . ." And the ladder started floating!

The loyal ladder-holders beckoned me over to help them, but I burst out into loud guffaws. "Mac" and the loyalists gazed at me in horror, but my laughter continued, and soon the crowd joined me, breaking up the meeting.

"Mac's" eyes blazed, and I sneaked to the other corner, delaying my return to the office for fear of meeting him there. But he had preceded me. An editor took me aside for a "little talk," shaking his head sadly as I tried to convince him of the humor of the situation.

"My boy," he said, "I am sorry, but you have the Capitalist-journalist viewpoint. To the capitalist newspaperman, life is just copy for a feature story to entertain and delude the mob. You cannot be a loyal Socialist at heart if you laughed when Mac was in such a fix. We only want loyal men on the staff. You are a traitor. We couldn't pay a salary to any one like you. . . ."

IN DEFENSE OF KANSAS

By Maureen McKernan

(This article came in as a letter of protest against the view of Kansas given in Meridel LeSueur's "Corn Village" which received honorable mention in SCRIBNER'S Narrative Contest. Because it presents another conception of Kansas and contains much material of intrinsic interest, we present it here.)

WE are a peculiar breed, fanatical in our defense of Kansas. The love of State is a cult, a creed, handed down to us by our fathers, and we continue fanatical in our praise of that little stretch of plain and wooded valleys, not knowing why.

To the stranger, Kansas is a flat, semi-arid region of monotony. To us who were born there, whose fathers were born there, it is a land to be loved and to be praised, even to the point of fanaticism. Attend some convention of a woman's club, listen to the speakers at any college assembly—you will hear praises of Kansas that to the alien ear are ridiculous. We've made ourselves a national joke by that very fanatical loyalty to a few acres of buffalo grass and sandy river bottoms. So we will rise and scream to the high heavens at Meridel LeSueur for what she says of the State where she was born—but I'll tell you why we protest. It is not that there are not truths in her portrait. There are. But what fires my indignation is that she, a native, should have written of Kansas from the viewpoint of a stranger. She has viewed it with the non-understanding eyes of an alien, and in so doing has denied certain qualities of her forebears.

For, you see, this love of Kansas was handed to us by our fathers and our grandfathers and while we have half-forgotten why we consider loyalty of Kansas next to godliness, we know that to deny that heritage of loyalty is to deny some tenet of a faith that is as strong in our blood as religion—perhaps stronger.

The reason for this inherited love of country is that Kansas, only two generations ago, was settled by a band of fanatical missionaries. There the territory lay, at the climax of the free-soil struggle, the borderland of the desert. The lush fields and green hills of Missouri, well within the rainbelt, where life was easy, was the western barrier of the green country. The sagebrush and sand of the eastern slope of the Rockies lay to the west. And here lay Kansas, just at the edge of the rains, a fertile country but dependent on the whims of the winds that sweep down without a hindrance from the poles. If the winds blew right, there was rain and lo, this broad plain bloomed and was as green and rich and fruitful as the plains of Illinois or Ohio. But let the winds sweep another way and the desert crept upon us. Kansas was green often enough to fire the ambition and the dreams of strong men and women who were willing to work hard and suffer privations, that they might have for themselves cheap land and a free State. Remember, too, that these pioneers, in that first influx of settlers in '54, came to make Kansas a free State. They were people who were capable of having religious convictions so strong that they were not only willing to go to war for them but were willing to work in the hot sun, and in the cold windy winters, for them.

Those men and women were our grandparents. They left easy lands behind and, for an idea, faced this little belt of green on the edge of the desert. They saw the rains come one year and spread the crops in lush and prodigal plenty across their acres. They saw the winds come the next year and turn

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those acres into a burning, sandy desert. But they remembered, in the dry years, the richness of the wet years, and so there grew up a hardy, hard working, hopeful people, with visions, for visions of the green years were necessary to make the dry ones bearable. They learned that one must not waste the plenty of to-day, because there may be a few days of want before more days of plenty come. But they learned that just as surely as the days of want come, so do days of plenty. And so they learned that hope is not the refuge of the weak but is the strength of the wise. The weaklings stayed through a green year, and fled when the dry years came. Those who remained behind, the grandfathers and the grandmothers of us Kansans of to-day, were those hardy souls with strong backs and visions.

Now when you have fought the desert and taken from it, with your bare hands and the steadfastness of your soul, acres of grass and woodlands and made them bloom and bear harvest, you love that land. You walk across a field and you remember how your own grandfather fought Indians and bushwhackers from the nigger land of Missouri, how he fought grasshoppers and burning winds, to make it a fertile field, and that soil beneath your feet becomes precious, because of the price your grandfather and your father paid, that it may to-day bear wheat and corn for you. And when droughts come, though you may feel like cursing such a land, you remember what your forebears suffered to buy it, and you remember the crops it has raised for you, and so you rub the dust from your eyes, and look to the northwest for a rain cloud, and you remind yourself that this aridity is but a passing whim of nature.

Other States were settled by overflows of population, by trappers, by merchants and soldiers and men hunting for places to build factories. But Kansas was settled for an idea—not for new acres or to extend commerce but for an idea—that Kansas soil should be free of slavery.

I cannot understand how a woman, such as Meridel LeSueur, could see her State through the eyes of the woman who wrote "Corn Village." She must have been an unfortunate little girl to whom no one told stories of the old days.

I know a village on the treeless plains of Kansas. It is out near the Colorado line where the world is so flat that it looks as though God smoothed it out with His palm, while He was making the world, and then went away and forgot to finish His work. A country of gray green buffalo grass and yucca, tumble weeds and cactus. Even the box-elder trees, those sturdy, pale little saplings that never attain their full growth, that huddle along the low places, are not native but were planted there by the pioneers. It is a flat country, with the sky a huge bowl set down over it. There is nothing to break the horizon in any direction and a child may lie at night upon his back and study every star in the heavens.

The tourist booming along the Kansas-Colorado boulevard sees only a stretch of monotony that burns his eyeballs, and the sight of a water tank and a hot-dog stand is like the sight of an oasis in the desert. Off to one side he may see a tiny ranch house, huddled in stunted box-elder and locust trees, and he wonders what manner of fools live in such a desolate land.

Now I know a family, children of pioneers, who live in that isolated ranch house. They rise at dawn, when the sky is pearl and pink and gold, and, off toward the west, a blue so deep that you can dip it up with a spoon. The air is clean and cool, even though the day may give promise of being a scorcher and the men come out of the house and stand and breathe deep and lift their chins and fill their chests, as they look at the green grass of the garden that stretches about the house. A deep cool shade makes almost black the knee-deep greenness of the blue grass of the lawn and from that black shade and beneath the low branches of these stunted little trees, the plains stretch off to their gaze, into infinity.

This is the house of Kansas people who have learned that their land will give them anything they are strong enough to take from it. The soil of all Kansas is a rich loam—the rich talus of millions of years' accumulation from the wooded slopes of the Rockies, washed down upon Kansas by the spring rains, until it lies a mantle, ten, fifteen, twenty feet deep—rich as the forest loam of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. These Kansas farmers, in this arid plain, have dug a well five hundred feet deep, from which a gas engine draws water that is almost ice cold, water that never gives out, for it flows through fissures of rock straight from the melting snows of the mountains. It is there, but you have to work to get it, and once you get it, it is better than the purest water of the loveliest streams of Michigan.

The trees and the flowers and the grass of that ranch house yard are irrigated from that well. All day the windmill turns, or the engine runs to pump water that flows in little ditches to lawn, and rose bushes, and potato patch. True, the ranchman's wife has to give an eye, now and then, to the windmill —or the pump if the wind is not blowing—and the ditches had to be dug, and the ground had to be tilled, to bring about this garden. The arid prairie lies just over the fence, and six months' neglect would let it in upon the garden. But attention and work keep it out and keep green the garden spot.

I rode on horseback one morning, beside one of the sons of that family, as he travelled back and forth across plowed ground, planting his father's wheat, and he and I talked of education and religion and careers and politics. After a while he said to me: "I don't know much about any of those things nor about this ambition you talk to me about all the time. But I do know this. I think that knowledge of how to plant wheat is a pretty good education, and as long as I can raise good wheat to feed babies in distant cities, I don't think I need worry a lot about religion. Raising wheat, that feeds people who cannot raise it themselves, seems to me a pretty good career, and religion."

In the evening when the summer twilight is long, after the supper has been cooked, and the cows milked, the field horses fed and turned into the small pasture, the chickens shut up for the night, we often rode across the prairie. Sometimes we went five miles over to visit our neighbors. Sometimes we just rode, to hear the grass sing beneath our horses' hoofs, to hear the night birds and the insects, to look for badgers or search out prairie pools where wild ducks rest for the night. I have watched, from horseback, on those evening rides, the love life of snakes, the village battles and gossip and baby-raising of prairie-dog towns, the sleepy murmurous evening idleness of wild

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ducks, the twilight strolls of coyotes. I have even seen beaver, on the banks of a pool in a prairie draw that runs a torrent in the spring, sitting in the twilight before their dams. And this is all in this year of grace, during an aimless horseback ride to nowhere in particular, across a prairie that goes nowhere, in that dull and dusty Kansas.

This little ranch home, in the middle of the endless plain, near a town that is but a huddle of houses, is like a dozen in that county. Behind the house is a kitchen garden and in the middle of it is a deep cave, covered over with sod. From that vegetable garden, into that cave, go vegetables enough to feed that family the entire year round. In a smokehouse near the cave there is always meat enough to feed a regiment. In winter, ducks and quail, prairie chicken and sometimes even a sand-hill deer, rabbits, and now and then wild geese—frozen stiff and hung to mellow. Pork and beef, sometimes fresh, always smoked or cured, are there. That little ranch house, lost in the prairie, is a feudal estate, sufficient unto itself.

The boys go away to school but they come home, for their father's business is the business they know, and they share in it. They know that if they care for a colt and raise it, they can buy a coonskin coat with its sale price. They know that a good wheat crop means two extra automobiles if they want them. And they know that even if the crop fails and the cattle sell at a loss, most of it is a paper loss, and that as long as the windmill works, there will be food aplenty, and a little money over from cream and eggs, to provide picture-show money for Saturday night.

The father of that family came to Greeley County in the '70's. He had been a roustabout on a Mississippi River boat, and he barely learned to read. He does not mind, now that he has a radio. He heard of the money to be made trucking by oxcart, from Fort Dodge to Fort Hays, before the railroads were built, and so he saved his wages, bought a wagon and oxen at Kansas City, and went out to Dodge. He freighted across the prairie until he had made some money, and then he homesteaded on a rise in the prairie where he liked the view—over fifty miles of buffalo grass. He married a girl who came out to teach school. They lived in a sod house, and they both worked hard. They bought up, from time to time, the claims of men and women who were whipped by the prairie. Bought them for a little or nothing, for cash enough to send the whipped ones back to tenant farming in Iowa. To-day they own ten thousand acres of wheatland and buffalo grass, and their horses and their cattle support them and send their boys away to school, when the wheat crop fails.

I was leaning over the gate just at darkness one night, and to the mother of this family I was talking about how the lights in cities would just now be coming on, and I was trying to tell her of the wonders and excitement of a city at dusk, when the lights make satin paths on the pavements, and every one passing you on the street is going to some place that will make him happy for a little while, home to rest from a hard day's work, or to parties or theatres, or gay restaurants. I was trying to tell her what evening in a city means, when work ceases and play begins, but she said to me:

"Well, I've never believed in discontentment, so because I live here I've always liked it. I think discontentment is bad for a body."

I said something about divine discontent that sends a boy or a girl away from the mud and the dust to cities where people live with ideas, not with the soil.

"Well, discontentment may be divine, but I've never had time for it. I've always been a kind of a fool maybe, but I've always been so busy trying to see how many flowers I could grow this year, and how comfortable I could make the house for the men, that I've never really thought much about whether I was contented or not. There's quite a lot of excitement for me, in seeing a red rambler grow and cover my porch. And I've always taken a lot of pride in seeing folks enjoy eating the meals I cook and in sitting on my grass and sniffing my posies that I raise myself."

A lawyer sat with me one evening, on the roof of a club in Kansas City, and gazed with me out over the plain of the Kaw River that stretched westward beneath us, and he saluted the view and said, "Land of sunshine, sunflowers and sons of bitches." And I laughed and thought he was clever, for Kansas is all of that. It is all of that. It's, in some degree, what Miss LeSueur pictures, but there is a meaning beneath the film of dust and ice that so deadened her spirit, and in defense of my State, I have tried to show you a little of that meaning.

We restless ones who run away from home are too apt to be beguiled by the surface beauty and manners of these eastern, and those far distant western, States. The Middle West is a hard country. Kansas, the heart of it, is hardest. It takes fortitude and courage and vision and bravery to conquer Kansas—and the Middle West—and those of us who have run away are the children who were lacking in those qualities. Maybe the rewards would not be of value to us. Certainly there are rewards for labor and living in other lands that are worth more than those to be given by Kansas. But Kansas and the people who live there should not be altogether damned as dull and sordid and unhappy. That is not fair to our fathers and our grandfathers who took their Bibles in one hand and their six-shooters in the other and went out to fight the desert and push it back with their own bare hands for the sake of the idea that black men should be free men. And that idea—that black men should be free men—is what populated Kansas, and most of us came from the loins of those bigoted people who thought such a cause worth suffering for in a cornfield under a broiling sun. They gave us birth, and whether they were right or wrong, they were sincere and they should not be forgotten. To see only the ugly of Kansas is to forget entirely the courage of those bigoted, fanatical, courageous, fighting and praying pioneers.

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AS I LIKE IT – *William Lyon Phelps*

KIPLING is sixty-six: and for forty-six years he has enjoyed fame. His verse and prose of the late 'eighties — "Departmental Ditties," "Barrack-Room Ballads," and "Plain Tales from the Hills"—came out of the East like a great dawn and flooded the world with almost intolerable light. With every succeeding volume the glare grew stronger. There was no shade; no one could hide from Kipling. Every one was talking about "Mandalay," "Danny Deever," "The Man Who Would Be King," and the "Soldiers Three."

Not since "Pickwick Papers" had the world seen such an advent. Kipling Clubs rose everywhere like tropical vegetation. What he thought of most of these can be easily surmised; but one of them he honored with an original manuscript poem. Yale undergraduates of the class of 1898, under the leadership of Gouverneur Morris (now one of our popular novelists), organized a Kipling Club which held regular meetings. At that time Mr. Kipling was living at Brattleboro, Vermont; and Mr. Morris invited him to attend the "annual banquet" of the Kipling Club. This invitation was fashioned with such art that it produced something of more permanent importance than a bodily presence. I shall not forget the day when Morris brought me the manuscript poem from Kipling in which he lamented his enforced absence and reminded the boys that the only certain result of excessive liquid enthusiasm was the Morning Head.

This poem was first printed in the *Yale Literary Magazine;* and as it was a genuine first edition, that particular issue has been much sought after by collectors.

I can remember many a fierce debate that arose among professional critics as to the permanent worth of Kipling's stories and poems. The octogenarian Tennyson gave the new poet a formal accolade; but many reviewers and critics insisted that the "Kipling craze" was a passing fad; they said his prose was only expert journalism and his poetry of no more value than the catchy jingles of the music halls.

To these detractors Kipling made the ideal response. He wrote "The Brushwood Boy," "Kim," "Recessional," and other works of genius.

Perhaps no man has travelled so much and changed so little. He has lived as a resident in India, in South Africa, in Vermont, and in Sussex.

> But in spite of all temptations
> To belong to other nations,
> *He remains an Englishman.*

Although his creative genius blazed gloriously before he was old enough to vote, it never took the form of rebellion. He was always on the side of the schoolmaster; he always upheld the supremacy of discipline; even in the heyday of youth he believed in the maxims of the copy-book. He is, and always has been, a good hater; and he hates most of all, slovenliness, carelessness, laziness, incompetence, disorder, conceit, irregularities, loudness. He does not forgive easily. But although he has never loved the United States of America, I think he could forgive America for almost everything except the American language and what he believes to be the American *voice*.

I feel sure he loves American machines. I am sure he prefers our instrumental music to our vocal.

His idea of regeneration—as shown repeatedly in his military stories—is the transformation from untidiness and incompetence to cleanliness and to the resourcefulness that meets emergencies. Even his good animals have the British virtues.

If it is possible for a consummate literary artist to be also a Philistine, we might perhaps say that Kipling illustrates the combination. When he first began to write, some critic (I have forgotten his name) said "Kipling is a Philistine, but with the strength of Goliath of Gath."

He has made imperishable additions to the glory of English literature—one thing he lacks. Is it spiritual grace? Perhaps the grace of humility?

George Moore, an austere literary artist, who recognizes the genius of Kipling, says that all through his work runs the refrain

> *I know a trick worth two of that.*

A new book by Kipling is an event. "Limits and Renewals," a series of tales with poetic interludes, is the first volume of stories from him that has appeared in six years. Like most of his previous work, it is saturated with the Bible. He must have diligently read the Scriptures all his life. It is not merely in stories like one of those in this volume, "The Church at Antioch," that biblical inspiration appears. Any one who knows the Bible can *hear* it in every Kipling book.

I wonder if he will ever write an autobiography. I have always wished to know the intellectual history of his boyhood.

"Limits and Renewals" is very Kipling. If we miss the flush of surprise so characteristic of his nineteenth-century work, we have at all events mature literary art, the work of a master. The wonder is that in those amazing thirteen years from 1886 to 1899, he did not burn himself out. To produce such a succession of masterpieces was almost miraculous. It is good to see that in this latest work he goes his own way—no compromises, no concessions. The son of Martha.

I never saw Kipling. At this moment I am writing in Paris in a room in the Hotel Continental. Across the narrow street is the Hotel Meurice where Kipling is staying.

Paul Cohen-Portheim, that shrewd observer of the English, speaking of the fact that in every age England produces poetry, says that with the English, poetry enjoys an eternal summer. Well, the English produce both poetry and prose. Surely it is notable that in the year 1932 the little island contains Kipling, Barrie, Galsworthy, Shaw, Moore, Wells, Walpole, Ervine, Chesterton, Housman, Masefield, Hodgson, Noyes, De la Mare, to mention only some of the men: can any other nation make such a display?

"I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day; the night

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cometh, when no man can work." Every ambitious man and woman hopes to have sufficient energy and ability to carry on chosen work up to the last moment on earth. Gamaliel Bradford, our distinguished American psychographer, lived just long enough to see a copy of his last work, "Saints and Sinners." He died on April 11 and the volume was formally published on April 20. He was a good friend of mine, and I have always regarded him as a quiet, unassuming hero; because, although he had a very slender hold on life, being chronically ill, his consuming interest in human nature triumphed over his physical weakness and suffering. He produced a long list of important works, all dealing with the souls of men and women. He won a special place for himself in contemporary literature by writing biographies in a new and original way. Instead of telling the story of the activities of famous persons, he endeavored to analyze their personalities, to uncover the springs of action. The titles of some of his books accurately reveal his method. "Damaged Souls," "The Soul of Samuel Pepys," "A Naturalist of Souls," "As God Made Them."

In this last volume, "Saints and Sinners," his art is seen at its best. He devotes a separate essay to various prominent figures in history, which show the range of human nature. Cæsar Borgia, Saint Francis of Assisi, Casanova, Thomas à Kempis, Talleyrand, Fénelon, Byron—what a collection! Apart from his literary skill, Mr. Bradford exhibited as he grew older a constantly increasing tolerance for and sympathy with men and women. Even the best characters have sometimes the impulses of criminals and degenerates; otherwise they would deserve little credit for goodness. Mr. Bradford—a thoroughly good man—saw his own heart in every one of his villains.

Ellery Walter, who went around the world on one leg, is a great traveller; but it is probable that he has made his last journey into Russia. His new book, "Russia's Decisive Year," ought to make him *persona non grata* in that interesting country. He is young, untrammelled by traditions or conventions, an ardent lover of freedom, a believer in daring experiments. It was natural therefore that he went to Russia with hope and faith. As he expresses it on page 19:

"I had come to Russia as a Communist sympathizer and a free lance writer interested in doing a story about the success of the Russian experiment and the life of the young Russians. That this book turned out to be something entirely different from what I had planned, is due to the fact that I travelled 15,000 miles through White Russia, Siberia, the Urals, the Ukraine, Georgia, and the Crimea in the sincere effort to give a true picture of conditions in the third and 'decisive year' of the Five-Year Plan. This travelling was done without an interpreter."

Those who are more interested in knowing the truth than in seeking support for an opinion will do well to read this book. Furthermore it is written in so sprightly and informal a manner, is so filled with concrete facts, is so definitely a report of what the author saw and heard, that one cannot begin it without reading every page. His account of the dinner given to Mr. Shaw and the speech made by the playwright is highly amusing. He describes the Shaw journey as a "trip that began as a lark and ended in a blare of publicity." Shaw "saw in Russia just exactly what he went to see." Mr. Walter went to remote places and talked with the peasant farmers; he went to gigantic farms and engineering centres where many thousands of Russian workingmen and women were crowded together. The facts were too much for his faith. A map of his travels shows where he went, and there are twenty-four photographs which he took. Although Russia is a land of promises, it is not the Promised Land.

I do not know why Dean Inge was ever attacked or condemned for writing from 1928 to 1930 a weekly column in the London *Evening Standard*. A request from a newspaper to any man, no matter how eminent in theology or in academic scholarship, is a compliment; for how few there are who can do such journalistic work acceptably! The famous Dean has collected some of these weekly papers in a volume called "More Lay Thoughts of a Dean," which is highly interesting and well worth careful reading. He is proud of having been a columnist, as he ought to be. He says in his preface:

"That I enjoyed the fun of writing them will, I think, be apparent; and I hope it will be equally clear that behind most of them was a purpose as serious as that of many sermons in church. I cannot be too grateful to the generosity of the *Evening Standard*, which gave me a perfectly free hand, even when my opinions did not exactly correspond with the politics of the paper. It was a privilege to address, week by week, so vast an audience, most of whom could not be reached by a clergyman in any other way."

As one reads these discourses, one wonders why the Very Reverend W. R. Inge was ever called the "gloomy" Dean. Here are some of the subjects: "Are the Modernist Clergy Dishonest?" "Is Betting Wrong?" "Seventy Years Old," "Women in Politics," "Cricket, Past and Present." The Dean writes with precision and emphasis; sometimes his words are like blows. He faces life and death and old age with candor. I do not know of any man who has less "Potterism." As regards old age, looking back on his life, he says, "I have been, on the whole, a happy man." He is sure that with him youth was not the happiest period; but he feels also that old age will not be. Please carefully note that future tense.

"To watch oneself becoming a back number and a fossil cannot be a pleasant experience, even if our friends find it out sooner than we do, and hide it from us with ironical civility. I think middle age is the best time, if we can escape the fatty degeneration of the conscience which often sets in at about fifty."

Yet, having read the Dean's books and enjoyed conversation with him in London, I believe he is happier now than he ever was before. Whatever shadows he may have now come only from the fear of what *may* happen; the most fruitful source of pain.

However this may be—and who am I to read the Dean's mind?—I commend his essay "Is Betting Wrong?" It is surprising how many interesting ideas and observations he has packed into this disquisition. The English, with the possible exception of the Chinese, bet and gamble more than any other nation. The Dean believes that the French, "who cultivate the art of living much more successfully than we do," do not bet and gamble nearly so much as the English. The Americans, whose type of civilization he deplores, "certainly do not"; though he has given no reason for it.

"But though nobody who knows the

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facts can deny that betting and gambling are a gigantic evil, it is not very easy to say in what the sinfulness consists. It is essentially a wish to obtain money without earning it; but I am afraid most of us are not vehemently averse from doing this. It is an appeal to chance; but many people feel that a world without the opportunity of an occasional lucky dip would be too dull to live in.

"At least, I suppose these are the motives; for personally I have never felt the smallest temptation to risk even a sixpence in this way. I have once or twice been obliged to play cards for money, 'to make up a four'; but for me it entirely destroyed the pleasure of the game. So perhaps I am not the right person to discuss this temptation sympathetically.

"Apart from the temptations to extravagance, dishonesty, and waste of time which betting and gambling bring with them, their worst feature seems to me to be the mental condition of which they are symptomatic. An utter lack of intelligent interest, a dreary boredom and discontent, an entire want of conscience about the getting and spending of money,—these are the only states of mind that could drive any one to the gaming-table or the sporting columns. To the man who has found his vocation this gadfly of boredom and monotony is unknown."

It is true that Americans do not yet gamble so much as the British; but the growth of bridge and the recrudescence of innocent-looking backgammon, have increased American gambling enormously. As a nation, we do not bet on horses, something all but universal in England; but we are beginning to imitate the British in playing games for money.

Although I am acutely conscious of many deficiencies in character and conduct, I have never played cards for money; and for two reasons. First, I was brought up not to, and this part of my early training sticks; second, I am so excited in playing any game and so eager to win, that I need no financial inducement. But I can understand the position of those who were brought up to play cards for a stake, and also of those who say that if there is no stake, wild and foolish bidding in bridge will spoil the game: so, every man to his taste.

I was sitting in church one day when the minister, in the course of his sermon, spoke against bridge for money.

"No church-member should play bridge for money. It is not the cash, it is the principle. Even if you played for a merely nominal stake, it is wrong. Even if you played bridge for a merely trivial sum, even if you played bridge for only five cents a point!"

The thrill of horror that ran over the congregation gave them away.

Pearl S. Buck, whose novel "The Good Earth" was awarded the Pulitzer Prize not only by the committee but by the public, reveals in her new story, "The Young Revolutionist," her own attitude toward life and religion, something she successfully concealed in the former work. Apart from the excellence of characterization and style in "The Good Earth," its most striking feature was its objectivity. It seemed astonishing that an American woman living in China, in close contact with educational, medical, and missionary activities, could write with such complete detachment. In "The Young Revolutionist," which I recommend every one to read, she has written a novel which is a tract; a tract against militarism and the religion of nationalism, with a persuasive representation of real religion. It is necessary to add that her strong convictions do not subtract anything from the literary value of this story. It is a revelation of Chinese family life, and of the honest bewilderment of a growing boy, who compares—as all boys and girls do —the facts of life with the beliefs that have been taught. Incidentally, the large class of persons who attack Christian medical missionaries without any knowledge of what they are doing, will find in this short book plenty of material for consideration.

Speaking of the Pulitzer Prize, a new and entirely original murder story has appeared from the hand of Dorothy Heyward, called "The Pulitzer Prize Murders." It is packed with thrills.

Sylvia Thompson, in "Summer's Night," makes an interesting novel out of an old theme—the uncordial entente between rank and riches. And she makes the eventual triumph of love seem reasonable. My sympathies are with the girl—her husband hardly seems worth the price.

In Florence I had the pleasure of taking tea with Mr. and Mrs. Delfino Cenelli, who inhabit a charming old palace in the Piazza Santa Croce. Mr. Cenelli is a prominent Italian novelist who writes books in his native tongue and translates them himself into excellent English. "The Trap," which has a preface by Carl Van Doren, is an exciting story of love and revenge. I read it through at a sitting and the characters seem real.

So much interest has been aroused by that tragic novel, "Hatter's Castle," written by a physician, Doctor A. J. Cronin, that I think my readers will be interested in his *Weekly Post* statement which I also owe to Mr. Clouter.

"The main theme of 'Hatter's Castle' came to me when I was in medical practice. I had always had the urge to write, and I made up my mind that Brodie would be the central figure of my first novel. He was a real person, not a friend or relative of mine, but a man whom I encountered many years ago. The orbits of our lives intersected, and I learned a great deal about him.

"As a doctor, I have always been deeply interested in the psychology of a certain class of people who although outwardly sane are actually a little mad—and it is with these people that as a novelist I intend to deal. Brodie fascinated me, for he was such a man—intensely egocentric—and when I decided to write the book I asked myself: 'If this man were placed in the most humiliating position possible, what would happen?' So Brodie became a small tradesman, a very real indignity indeed for him.

"When I went up to the Highlands of Scotland I began the book immediately with the idea of Mary's tragedy in my mind for Part One, and of Brodie's business downfall for Part Two. Actually, Parts One and Two were completed before Part Three was constructed."

THE FANO CLUB

On April 13 we entered Fano for the second time in twenty years. We motored from Venice, seeing Vicenza, Verona, Padua, Ferrara, Bologna, Ravenna, Rimini, on the way. In Fano the church of San Agostino, where Robert and Elizabeth Browning saw the picture of "The Guardian Angel" in 1848, was recently shaken by an earthquake. They are now repairing the church;

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but we found the painting in the Museum. The frame remains in the church, and on the wall beside it stands the tablet placed there by Professor Armstrong of Waco, Texas. At a post-card shop in the town, the proprietor told me that in the last few years many Americans had come to buy cards, and had always alluded to some Club. I informed him that I was the President, and he seemed deeply impressed.

New members are Mr. and Mrs. H. P. Garland and my friend from Albany, William H. Walker, who after nearly freezing to death in Italy, wrote from Fano:

"I've found out why there were so many wars in Europe. Folks would rather fight than stay home and freeze in cold stone houses. Have not been warm since I left Seville."

I have spent parts of three Aprils in Rome without seeing a warm day. Yet I shall certainly go there again. One of the most memorable features of my stay in Rome on this occasion was finding my old friend, the philosopher George Santayana. He is not only one of the most consummate literary artists in the world (read his "Soliloquies in England") but equally good in intimate conversation. We had long walks and talks. Incidentally I will pass on to my readers a valuable health hint communicated to me by Mr. Santayana, who received it from a Roman physician. On getting up in the morning and before going to bed at night and at any other time walk around the room *blowing*. Blow exactly as if you were trying to extinguish the light of an obstinate candle. Do not inhale first and then blow; blow and you will have to inhale, whether you want to or not.

A second Fano epistle from Mr. Walker informs me of two further experiences he had in that Scribner-made-famous town. First, he found a good hotel in the centre of the city. Second,

"I had an interesting experience by being routed at 12.45 A.M. by the police to examine my papers; and they put me over the jumps as to why I was there, how long I intended to stay in Italy, whom did I know in Italy, etc. and finally withdrew after an hour, to have two of them see me off at the station the next morning at 6.15. Am glad I went to Fano but will never go back again."

Mr. Walker continued his travels east of Italy, with the following discovery:

"I have found that all bugs may be divided in two classes: those that bite and fly away and those that bite and stay with you. I have only heard of the first kind and have no experience with them."

Doctor James F. Muirhead, whom many Americans will recognize as the author of Baedeker's "United States," has performed a valuable service to world-literature, and to English-speaking people in particular, by translating from the German the late Carl Spitteler's prose epic, "Prometheus and Epimetheus." Carl Spitteler, winner of the Nobel Prize for literature in 1919, was a distinguished Swiss poet, born in 1845, died in 1924. Although he has a towering reputation on the Continent, and a Commission has been appointed by the Swiss Government to prepare a national edition of his works, he is not nearly so well known in America as he deserves to be or as our own welfare requires. Romain Rolland has stated that Spitteler is the greatest epic poet since Milton.

Doctor Muirhead has made a remarkably skilful translation of "Prometheus and Epimetheus." He gives not only the spirit of the original, but has caught the splendid roll of the rhythmic prose; it reminds one in places of our English Bible. The only fault I can find in the work—and this of course had to be repeated in the translation—is its voluminousness. Selection and condensation have never been characteristic of German prose writers.

But though long and profuse, the work is interesting. There is enough momentum to carry the reader on to the next page. One really wants to find out what is coming next. Then, too, there are passages of magnificent prose poetry; and the symbolism is transparent.

In a time when axioms in geometry, economics, and ethics are boldly challenged, the underlying philosophy of this work gives the reader material for constant reflection.

Perhaps, after reading Doctor Muirhead's Prefatory Note, one might begin at page 113 with Part Two, called "Pandora," and read that as a separate story; then go back to the beginning of the book and read the whole epic straight through. I earnestly recommend this book to students of comparative literature and to all serious readers; and I myself am looking forward to more translations from the same poet.

Here is a letter I should not believe genuine if I had not been sent the photostat. A gentleman who gives Browning readings received the following reply from an American club.

"I have your letter of April 9th . . . in which you refer to Robert Browning and his readings, etc. I presume the object of this letter is to consider Mr. Browning for a . . . program.

"The club meets on Monday of each week, but I perhaps could arrange a . . . program some Monday at 7.30 P.M. and make this a special meeting inviting in a number of special guests to give Mr. Browning an opportunity to put on a real program, providing Mr. Browning does not fix a prohibitive price on this service.

"The . . . Club has been hard hit as all other clubs have been. I would not be in a position to any more than pay Mr. Browning's expenses . . . which I am sure would not interest him unless it was his judgment that the advertising feature would reward him for the effort."

BOOKS MENTIONED, WITH AUTHORS AND PUBLISHERS

"Limits and Renewals," by Rudyard Kipling. Doubleday Doran. $2.50.

"Saints and Sinners," by Gamaliel Bradford. Houghton Mifflin. $3.50.

"Russia's Decisive Year," by Ellery Walter. Putnam. $2.50.

"More Lay Thoughts of a Dean," by W. R. Inge. $2.75.

"The Young Revolutionist," by Pearl S. Buck Friendship Press (John Day). $1.50.

"The Pulitzer Prize Murders," by Dorothy Heyward. Farrar & Rinehart. $2.

"Soliloquies in England," by George Santayana. Scribners. $3.50.

"Summer's Night," by Sylvia Thompson. Little, Brown. $2.50.

"The Trap," by Delfino Cenelli. John Day. $2.

"Prometheus and Epimetheus," translated by Carl Spitteler. Scribners. $2.50.

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THE BIG SHORT TRIP - - *Continued from page 69*

"Listen, Hal, sixty days is co-operation, you've got to agree on that. I'd give you the stuff on consignment if I could, only you know that isn't business. There aren't four men in the country that I give sixty days to."

"Would you believe it, Sam, I could fill up the place with consignment stuff, but those firms always nick you some way."

"Leave consignment stuff entirely alone, Hal. I've been in the business a good many years and that's my advice. We give you the best possible merchandise and the lowest possible prices and I ask you, can anybody ask for more than that? You couldn't pay rent selling consignment goods."

"All right, all right, only that's all I want. Give me a copy of the order," Hal said.

"Just a minute, Hal. Look at this." Sam showed him a twenty-dollar gentleman's special. "You bought that at twenty-five, Hal, two years ago. You can sell it for twenty today. We had a lot in stock and are cleaning them out but no orders for less than ten. I'll sell the whole stock of them before I ever get as far as Chicago at that price."

"Well, I'll cut down some other stuff and take a few."

"No, you don't. You haven't ordered enough, you can't sell jewelry unless you've got some stock to show your customers. The surest way to fail in business is to let your stock run down. You've got to have a good selection. I'll put you down for ten."

"You won't either, Sam, five."

"O. K., five then." Sam realized that he had gotten a very good order out of Hal. He hoped he had not overdone it. His successor would have a hard time with Hal if Sam oversold him.

"I guess that's about all this time. There'll be a man through in the fall to see you about the big order," Sam said.

"I've got enough stuff for two years by the looks of it. Leave me a copy of the order, Sam."

"I'll mail it to you. I'll make it out at the hotel tonight."

Sam closed his case, leaned back, and they fell to talking about Sam's retirement again. When Sam got up to go, Hal said, "I wish you didn't sell Kling's, damn it, they're cutting prices on your stuff."

"They can't do that, I'll take the line away from them if they do."

"Well, they do, and you told me last time you were through, you weren't going to show them that Junior Debutante white-gold model. They had a window full of it."

"Well, Hal, the way that was, was this. Loeb saw the ad for it and ordered it. We've got to fill orders like that. I never showed it to him." Sam was lying cheerfully. He had pushed that number hard with Kling's.

"I don't like those kikes, Sam," Hal said. "We're the oldest jewelers in town. They come in, cut prices, give credit, sell cheap junk, and it cuts into us. The only way we can do is sell junk too."

"You make the money, Hal, that's what counts. You've got the standing here, you're known all over the country. I would rather do business with you than with these other men. I mean there aren't three other men in the country have got your standing in the jewelry business. That's something. Don't let ants worry you. You make money and this store of yours is as fine a looking store as there is in the country."

"Well, I try to keep it first class of course. But I guess there are plenty of better ones."

"No, sir, there aren't," Sam said.

"Well, I'm glad to hear you say it, Sam, but I guess there are plenty." Flederman felt pretty sure that though other stores might be bigger, taken on the whole there were few better jewelry stores in the country.

"Well, good-by, Hal, next time I get to Buffalo I'll see you as a private citizen."

"Well, Sam, it's been a pleasure to do business with you all these years and I hate to see you quitting."

"You ought to congratulate me."

"I do and good luck to you."

The clerks nodded to Sam as he walked toward the door. He stopped up front and spoke to the old watchmaker.

"I won't be seeing you again for a while, Mr. Fried."

The old fellow took the glass out from his eye. "What's up, Mr. MacHenry?"

Sam told him he was retiring, on his last trip. The old fellow got up and shook hands with him. "I like to work on Marvin watches," he said. "That's a good line of yours."

"They don't have to be worked on much," Sam said. The old fellow chuckled. "Well good-by," Sam said.

He had only a block to walk to Kling's. Gus Loeb, the buyer, was a smart young fellow and Sam didn't like him any too well. But they did sell the stuff. They ran a very close second to Flederman's. Loeb was standing in front of the store when Sam walked in. He was overseeing the trimming of a window.

"Better get some Marvin watches in there," Sam said.

"I got to put stuff in the window that sells," Loeb said.

"How are you?" Sam said. They shook.

"If you've cut a half off your prices I'll look at your line, otherwise nichts. I can get watches for half your prices."

"You can't get Marvin watches or anywheres near as good for a penny off our prices and you know it."

"Yah, yah, yah, listen to him, Bill." Gus Loeb turned to a young clerk. The clerk grinned, proud to be spoken to. Sam was a little flustered. He didn't like Gus Loeb's blustering ways at all.

There were no customers in the store, there had been none in Flederman's. Sam felt pretty sure he had oversold Hal. Then he said to himself, if they've got the goods they'll push it and sell it. You've got to try and sell them all you can.

"Well, Mr. Loeb, I've got three or four things here you can't afford to overlook. And prices have never been so low."

"Just a minute," Gus said. He told the window trimmer to finish up and started back toward his cubicle. Half way back he turned around. "Well, bring your stuff along, I'll look for a minute. Only I haven't got much time. I'll run through the line in a minute."

Fellows like Gus took the wind out of Sam's sails. He followed to the office. Once he got his case open he got his steam up and started in on his sales talk. He forgot that he didn't like Gus and

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grew enthusiastic. Gus listened without talking. Every now and then he answered by a half sneering laugh. Sam went right on. He tried to get Gus to say how many he would take as he talked about each item. Gus said he wanted to go through the whole line first.

He called to a clerk. "Bring the Marvin list." The clerk stepped out and came back with a paper showing everything they had in stock of Sam's line.

"You see," Gus said, "we can't sell your stuff. Look at all of this. I ought to make you take it back. Here's eight of that Junior Debutante model."

"Let's see," Sam said. He looked. "Why, my God, man, you haven't even got a representation of the line. And you'll sell those Debutantes for graduation."

"Ha, ha, oh, yoi," Gus said.

"All right, how about Lady Exquisite backed by a big campaign of national advertising?"

"One," Gus said. Sam marked it down. They went through the line rapidly. Gus took ones and twos and didn't duplicate anything he had in stock. It was a small order.

"What's the best terms on this?" Gus asked.

"Two per cent ten days cash or thirty days net."

"Five per cent cash," Gus said.

"Can't do it."

"All right, sixty days," Gus said.

"I can't do it."

"All right, thirty days. Make me a copy of the order."

"I'll mail it to you from the hotel."

"You've got lots of time, write it out now, I want to look it over." Sam wrote it out and gave Gus a copy. Gus didn't even glance at it, he just laid it on the back of his desk. Sam was glad he wasn't going to call on him any more. He didn't tell him this was his last trip. He just walked out, said good-by, stood at the curb a minute until he saw a taxi. Then he went back to the Statler.

It was noon and Sam would be able to make the early afternoon train to Cleveland. He had finished up very quickly and it was a good day because Flederman's order was a good one. He had lunch, bought a paper and sat in the lobby reading. Sam was tired and sat back in his chair, a deep-cushioned lounge chair, thinking about the fun he and his son Gerald would have travelling around together.

He left the hotel in plenty of time to make his train. In the chair car he looked carefully at the five passengers but didn't know any of them. The porter smiled at him like an old acquaintance and with a great deal of superfluous bustle arranged Sam's sample case beside the seat and put the gladstone on the rack overhead.

"Nice day, sir, nice day," he said.

"Yes, sir, George, it's a fine day," Sam said, benevolently and heartily.

The trip to Cleveland was monotonous. Part of the time he read the paper. Then he dozed for a few minutes. When he pulled himself out of the doze he went in for a smoke. At any moment of the day when the thought struck him that this was his last trip, he noticed things around him with more than usual clearness. He thought of how many of his customers were really his oldest and best friends. This could easily be the last time he would see them. He decided as he sat alone in the smoking-compartment that he would call up Harry LaSalle that afternoon in Cleveland and ask him to have dinner. Harry was Sam's age and one of the finest fellows Sam knew. If he didn't see Harry he would have to look up Bessie Rowe.

He puffed on his cigar. He usually threw them away after they were a third smoked. The last part of the cigar was the harmful part according to Sam. The first third couldn't hurt any man.

The room clerk in Cleveland knew Sam. "I'm glad to see you, Mr. MacHenry. Will you be with us for a while?"

"Maybe two days. Give me a good room."

"Best in the house." He smiled at his joke. "Here, boy, Mr. MacHenry, 814."

"Just a minute," Sam said. He stepped up to the mail desk. He hoped Gerald had sent him a letter. There was one letter for him from the firm and a plain unstamped envelope with his name written on it. He looked at it and knew it was from Bessie Rowe, buyer at Carter's. With the two letters he followed the boy to his room, tipped fifteen cents, washed his hands and face and sat down to read the letters. Bessie knew he would be in town because of the advance cards sent out from the office. She was also one of the only customers who knew Sam was retiring after that trip. Before his arrangements to retire were finally completed he was cagey about letting people know he had it in mind. He was afraid Abe Bernstein, president of the firm, would hear about it indirectly and get sore at not being the first to know. But Bessie was the kind to draw out a man.

"Dear Sam," she wrote, "I've got a hunch you will get in on the afternoon train. If you do, call me up at the apartment or at the store if it is not too late. I've got a surprise planned. Don't fail me. Bessie."

Sam got tired of Bessie acting as though she owned him every time he was in Cleveland. He really wanted to sit around gassing with Harry LaSalle, of LaSalle and Prine, Jewelers, that night. But Bessie always put herself out to be nice to him and he had to admit she was a fine woman. It wouldn't be fair to try and make her think he got in next morning. Besides she might find out the truth.

He opened the letter from Abe Bernstein. "Dear Sam: You just left the office but I got a letter from Martin. He's in Michigan now and will be in Chicago when you are there. Now please remember all the stuff we talked over about him and fire him if necessary. There are a hundred good salesmen here in the city we can get in a minute to take his place. He doesn't sell enough goods to buy canary feed. I know you'll do all any man can but damn it all if things don't pick up pretty quick we're going to be in a bad way. I seriously don't think you ought to leave the firm now, in a time like this. Of course, if the doctor says you ought to retire then you know your own business. But right now we need you and it's as much to your interest as to me or my brother. We've all three of us got the firm's interest at heart. But anyway Sam old fellow I hope you have a good trip just so we can show these men we've got that they aren't selling the stuff they ought to. Abe."

It was still early enough to make one of the five calls Sam had in Cleveland. But in the morning he would be fresher and the buyers more in a mood to look at the line. When Sam was young in the business he wouldn't have missed even a half hour late in the afternoon if there was a chance to do some busi-

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ness. But he had learned to hoard his energy and make his job a more or less routine one. He didn't want to skimp on the job this last trip but wanted to cover the territory thoroughly. If he could get good orders it would be an example for the other salesmen.

He left his key at the floor clerk's desk and went down to the lobby. The Cleveland hotel hadn't the imposing lobby of the newer one in Buffalo. It was quiet, with here and there a few middle-aged, well-dressed men sitting reading and smoking. Two overdressed and overstuffed women walked arm in arm down the length of the lobby. Bessie Rowe would be glad to see him. The two women ogled Sam, a couple of radio sopranos or a vaudeville team. Sam straightened up his shoulders and involuntarily glanced at his necktie. The women passed smelling high of Nuit de Noel.

Sam walked up the block and a half to Carter's Department Store and into the jewelry department. He saw Bessie showing a customer pearl necklaces. She noticed Sam but pretended not to, and went on with her talk about the pearl necklaces. Sam slowly walked nearer pretending to be looking carefully at the jewelry in the cases, watching Bessie out of a corner of his eyes. He stopped walking and looked hard into a show-case containing vanity sets and cigarette cases.

A salesgirl started toward him from behind the counter. He looked up at her and she recognized him. "Oh, you want to see Miss Rowe?"

"Yes, thanks," Sam said.

Bessie turned and acted as if she had seen Sam for the first time. "Excuse me a minute," she said to her customer. She hurried over to Sam and held her hand across the counter. They shook. "Oh, Sam, you got my note, good. I'll be with you in a minute. Wait here. See those new vanities. Aren't they the sweetest? I got them from Krauter's man."

Sam continued to study the vanities. There was a thing had made a lot of money for the man who got it up. He looked around the floor. There were few customers in the store. Only four people were looking at jewelry, and it was a big department.

When Bessie finished with her customer she came back, leaned over the counter and said, "How are you, Sam? How's Gerald? Is this really your last trip?"

"Yes, everything is all set, Bessie. When I get back I turn in the samples and wash my hands of the business. Of course I'm keeping my interest in the firm but I don't intend to ever do another day's work. Gerald's fine. He and I will have a fine time as soon as he's out of college. I'll go up for the graduation exercises, after that you won't see any grass growing under our feet."

"Oh, Sam, we're going to miss you so. I sure hate to see you leave. But for your sake it's fine. It's really great, Sam. You should have brought Gerald around with you. I want to meet him. He must be a fine young fellow."

"He is, Bessie. He's very smart. He'll get ahead. He's got a big future."

"Well, Sam, he's your boy, isn't he?" Bessie looked over Sam's shoulder and saw Mr. Lloyd, one of the store managers, walking slowly up the aisle toward the jewelry department. She was supposed to interview salesmen only in the buyer's offices on the eighth floor and Mr. Lloyd's presence made her nervous.

"Well, Sam, here comes old Lloyd. They're awfully strict on the floor here now, firing every second person. I'll see you after work in just a few minutes. Will you be in the lobby? Here's the idea. I asked Harry LaSalle and Jimmy Krantz and Mabel Adler, all of them, to come up to my apartment the night you were in town for a party. Everything is set only I wasn't sure you would get in tonight, so I'll have to call them up. I'll see you in the lobby, just a few minutes."

"We'll have dinner at the hotel," Sam said.

"No, you're going to have dinner at the apartment. Now run along before old Lloyd gets up here, he'll take my hair off."

"So long, Bessie."

Sam leisurely walked out of the store without looking at old Lloyd who didn't matter much to Sam. He sauntered down the street and smelled the fresh spring air off Lake Erie, blown through the dust of the main street. The sun hit the pavement in long sweeps. As Sam walked along he was stopped by a middle-aged and fairly well-dressed man who asked him the time. Sam looked at his wrist watch, the Wall Street model, and said, "Four fifty."

"Pardon me, sir, but I'm out of a job. I haven't got a nickel. Would you help me out, even if it's only a little something?"

Sam tried not to act surprised, the man was no ordinary panhandler. He pulled out a half dollar and handed it to the man. There were so many men out of work.

"I hope this will help you out some, that's too bad," Sam said.

The man took the half, saluted Sam and hurried on. He was afraid he might get pinched for panhandling. When Sam was going about his business, sample case in hand, he was seldom stopped by beggars; it was when he was just leisurely walking along that they tried it.

When Sam got to the hotel he went to his room, took a watch from his sample case and went down to the lobby again. He had to wait only a few minutes for Bessie. She walked confidently into the hotel lobby. She looked about thirty when she waved her hand, and her eyes lit up at recognition of Sam. Bessie was forty-two.

"Let's eat here, Bessie, how about it?"

"No, silly. I've got everything all ready at home. I don't like the Statler. Now come along."

At the time she was doing it Sam enjoyed the way Bessie took him over and ran things. After he was away from Cleveland he always resented it. His sister Anna had too much of that same way about her.

They took a taxi to her apartment and if Sam hadn't been quick about it Bessie would have paid the driver. The building was modern and cheaply constructed, with automatic elevator and small thin-walled apartments. Bessie's apartment was spic and span with mahogany furniture and colored reproductions of old masters on the walls, standing lamps and table lamps, ash trays and two boxes of cigarettes. She had a living-room, combination dining-room and kitchenette, bedroom and bath, all for $55 a month.

"You sure keep your house in order," Sam said.

"It's no trouble, Sam. I like things to be comfortable."

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A bell rang. Bessie went to the telephone. Groceries she had ordered after seeing Sam at the store had arrived below. She told the man to bring them up.

"Now, Sam, just make yourself at home, it's awfully nice to have you here for dinner. I'll just slip on an apron and get busy."

"Can't I help you?"

"No, there isn't a thing, it's really easy. I won't make myself any trouble, you can believe that."

Sam sat down and picked up a copy of *The Ladies' Home Journal.* He was uneasy thinking this might be the last time he would see Bessie. The apartment bell rang. Sam got up and took the groceries from the boy. He put them down on the dining table. Bessie stuck her head and shoulders out of the bedroom.

"Oh, it was the groceries, thanks, Sam," she said. Her dress was off and Sam could see her bare shoulders. She was a fine husky woman.

"Don't go getting yourself all dolled up now, Bessie," he said.

She came out dressed up in her best with a pretty pink apron covering part of the front.

"You look swell," Sam said. He got up from the chair.

"Really?" Bessie said. She walked over close to him. "Now just sit down and keep calm a few minutes." Sam reached out his right hand and pressed Bessie's in it. She stopped, undecided for a minute what to do.

"I've got to hurry with the food," she said. She drew her hand away and went to the kitchenette.

Sam plumped himself down in the chair. It seemed that he and Bessie could never get closer to each other than merely holding hands. Sam felt pretty sure that she would give in to him if he started something but he didn't think it would be fair to her. She would fall like a ton of lead and he would never get untangled. She was such a good sport he figured it was best for them just to be good friends always.

Bessie had candles on the table and they ate dinner in half darkness. Conversation was slow until they started talking about jewelry. Then things picked up, Sam's uneasiness left him, and Bessie grew brighter. Sam mentioned the panhandler who had stopped him.

"Oh, that's nothing, there are hundreds of them. And there are so many girls out of work. Half the salesgirls at the store have been fired. Things are getting bad in Cleveland."

"Cleveland is better off than most big cities," Sam said.

"I can't believe it. We've got bread lines and soup kitchens here and an awful lot of unemployed. My father died three years ago, he was a socialist, he used to say things were shaping themselves up for real hard times in this country. Of course he had that point of view, I mean of the socialists."

"They get ideas that go a little too far. Gerald for instance, he holds up what they are doing in Russia pretty high. We had quite an argument at spring vacation. It's pretty hard to get around him in an argument, he's sharp, he knows how to argue."

"My father could argue your leg off about socialism. I've seen him at it half the night but he never got any place," Bessie said.

"Well, they don't have any unemployment in Russia for instance. But I say that's only temporary. They make them work, I wouldn't like that system. I told Gerald that, I told him I could agree with him as far as saying it would be a good thing if everybody was better off than they are. The only thing, I don't see how you can do that without making people who have worked hard for it lose out. It won't work."

"Of course not, Sam."

"That's what I tell Gerald."

"Well, he's young, he'll get over such ideas. Only my father never did until he died. But he never made any money. Us kids all had to work. He was such an impractical dreamer. But he was a fine dad just the same."

"If he hadn't had such ideas he would have gotten ahead."

"That's what my mother used to say."

Sam suddenly remembered the watch. He fumbled in his side coat pocket and pulled out a velvet case. "Bessie, this is for you. Our newest model, the Lady Exquisite. Here."

"Oh, Sam, that is just too sweet." Bessie quickly got up from her chair and came around to Sam. She opened the case. "Oh, it's just adorable."

She threw her arms around Sam's neck and gave him a smacker on the lips. "You darling, Sam, I'm going to put it right on." She took off the little model she wore and dancing around the room fastened the new one on her arm. "See it, Sam, see it."

"Now keep cool, little girl," Sam said. "You go acting that way and I'll bring the whole line up here and dump it at your feet."

"Oh, that was sweet of you to do that. Only really you shouldn't give me such a wonderful watch. I shouldn't let you."

"This is my last trip, Bessie, and don't you worry. I wanted you to have that model."

Bessie thought that she might dare hope. Sam to her was such a wonderful gentleman, and he must think a lot of her to give her such a present. "Oh, Sam, you're the finest man in the world." She sat down again and cut a piece off her lamb chop.

"Well, I didn't want you to forget Sam right away," Sam said.

"Don't worry." She was real calm and collected, and she looked him square in the eyes. "I'll never forget you, Sam, don't you believe me?"

"No, Bessie, there are too many gents on the road."

"Oh, you silly stupid, you."

Sam put a piece of lamb chop in his mouth and chewed earnestly. With a word from him Bessie would say yes, they would get married and could try to make a life together. This idea merely flashed across Sam's brain. Yes, and spoil the two years he had planned to spend knocking around with Gerald. The idea was ridiculous.

"Sam, I didn't ask you if you wanted anything to drink."

"No, I've got to go easy on it, Bessie."

"I know, you told me, that's why I didn't offer you something. I've got two bottles of gin."

When they finished eating Sam offered to help with the dishes but Bessie wouldn't hear of it. She said they would just stack things up in the kitchen. Sam helped clear off the table and they went into the living room. Bessie turned the light on beside the davenport and sat down at one end. She hoped Sam would sit down beside her. He chose the arm-

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chair across the room and sat down. His stomach was slightly uncomfortable and he felt gas. He reached in his vest pocket for a small flask of soda-mint tablets and put two in his mouth.

"I have to take these things when I eat such a fine big dinner as that. I don't usually eat so much."

"I'm afraid it wasn't good, Sam, or you wouldn't have to take soda."

"It was wonderful, Bessie, wonderful, only I have to watch myself. These soda-mints fix me right up, a little gas is all."

The bell rang and Bessie went to the telephone. Harry LaSalle was downstairs. She told him to come right up. When Harry walked in he looked at Sam a little resentfully. He would like to have given the party at his bachelor quarters with no women in on it. He had little use for Bessie anyhow, because she had quit his firm eight years before to become buyer at Carter's.

He spoke pleasantly to Bessie and shook with Sam. "Well, Sam, we won't be having many more of these little gatherings if it's true you're retiring." He had a package in his hand which he turned over to Bessie. "Some Scotch a friend brought me from Canada. I thought I ought to contribute something to the festivities."

"Can you drink a little Scotch, Sam?" Bessie asked.

"Sure, of course, a little is all right," Sam said. Bessie went to the kitchenette to mix the drinks.

"Is it a fact you're retiring, Sam?" Harry asked.

"It's a fact. I want to take my boy around the world for a couple of years after he gets out of college. It'll do him no end of good. A person needs something like that before settling down to his life work. He'll see a lot. It'll do him as much good as college."

"Well, Sam, without wanting to discourage you in any way, I have an idea you'll be out here with the Marvin line again in a very short time. You aren't the sort of man can retire right in the prime of life."

"No, sir, Harry, you're wrong. I'm going to have a good time."

"I couldn't do it, Sam. I'm going to die in the harness. That's my idea. Of course I like to take a vacation. I take a month every year, but I like the business, I get a real lift out of it."

"Well, the fact is, Harry," Sam lowered his voice, "I'm not telling everybody; but my doctor—he's a good man, Park Avenue man—he told me I would have to take it easy or I would be under the sod in ten months. He said if I quit work and had a good time, loafed around and enjoyed myself, I was good for thirty years yet. Now when they put it up to you like that you do something about it. Isn't that right, Harry?"

"Well, of course that's different, Sam. You want to take it easy. Is it the heart?"

"Well, yes, and the stomach."

"You were sick here a couple of years back. I figured that was a hangover though. You must have put away a couple of quarts of Scotch that night. You remember? Jim Barnes and Harley Root were there. That was a good all-night poker session all right."

"Well, that trip was the last time I ever drank that way. I've just about given it up. The doctor said a little now and then, never in excess, you know, hadn't ought to hurt me very much. I take a little."

Jimmy Krantz and Mabel Adler from the Strand Jewelry Company pushed the bell and were invited to come up. Harry LaSalle cared even less for this pair than for Bessie, and only his code of ethics made it possible for him to appear friendly toward them. They came in jovial and loud and greeted Sam effusively. They shook quietly with Harry and Bessie and sat down.

"I'll bring you something to drink. It's on Harry," Bessie said.

"Always glad to drink on Harry," Jimmy Krantz said. "How's business?" He looked at Harry.

"It's very good with us," Harry said. "I'm surprised with all the talk about bad business how it is keeping up." It was a lie.

"We're doing fine, too," Jimmy said.

"Yeah? You call it fine when you run four thousand behind the first four months?" Mabel Adler, co-worker of Jimmy, said. "It's terrible isn't it, Sam? It's bad all over."

Jimmy spoke up. "Well, I mean everything considered I think we are doing very well. We never ran behind four thousand, Mabel, you don't know what you are talking about." He gave her a cold look square in the eyes.

"I guess maybe not," she said.

Harry La Salle was pleased to know the Strand was doing badly. When it first opened up with a credit business it had cut into Harry's business pretty deeply. He grew more and more uncomfortable in the presence of his competitors. He wished he hadn't come.

Finally, thinking about the depression, Jimmy spoke up and said if something didn't happen to make business pick up and give work to the unemployed there would be trouble in the country.

That was more than Harry could stomach. "Not in the U. S. A. It's Russia has caused the depression with dumping and forced labor. There won't be any trouble here. The real Americans, who have got a real American background, won't let anything happen here. What we have got to do is throttle Russia. There she is growing stronger every day, underselling us. Price-cutting is ruinous. Russia ought to be wiped off the map."

"You couldn't wipe a sixth of the earth off the map," Jimmy said. "What do you mean, we ought to have a war against Russia?"

"That's exactly what I mean," Harry said.

"It would be the bloodiest war in history. Why, with a war like that the whole world would be wrecked. That would be the quickest way to bring this country into the same system they've got there."

"The Russians are slaves," Harry said.

"What about the fellows working down on the iron docks. They're slaves just as much. Only they can't even get enough work to keep their bellies full."

"That's a lot of radical nonsense. That shouldn't be allowed, that kind of talk," Harry said.

Sam listened intently. Every place he went that sort of talk seemed to get started. He heard it from Gerald and it seemed that in any gathering there was always some one who sympathized with Russia. He was inclined toward Harry's attitude himself.

"My boy told me there was a chance for something like that to happen, Jimmy," Sam said. "He claims it's bound to happen. But I told him, like Harry says, in America we are fundamentally sound. We have the right idea. He tries

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to tell me I don't know what I'm talking about but I say we don't need to worry."

Harry spoke up. "It's young fellows like your boy doing most of the talking. We all go through that but when we get mature-minded we get over it. Except some of us." He looked at Jimmy. "You did right to talk to your boy, Sam. You've got to get such ideas out of the minds of the young. They get them from nut professors in the colleges. That's got to be eradicated. We've got the best form of government in the world and it's got to be held up in all walks of life, and especially in business and the colleges. The business men of America are the mainstay of prosperity, and we have to stick to fundamentals. That will bring the country out of the depression with flying colors."

Jimmy winked at Mabel. She was looking at the floor and yawned. Harry's oration was not remarked upon. He got up and left in bad humor.

A few minutes later Sam made a move to leave, and Jimmy and Mabel said they would go too. Bessie thought quickly and suggested that Sam stay on a few minutes and look at some pictures she had of her family, she had always wanted him to see them.

Sam said, "Gosh, Bessie, I'd like to but it's getting late and I've got to get some sleep. I'll look at them some other time. Don't worry, it won't be so long before I'll be back here again."

Bessie's face showed that she was hurt because she wasn't going to get a chance at Sam alone. He called a cab and told Jimmy he would take the two of them home. Then they all sat down waiting for the cab. Bessie was quiet and looked at Sam rather glumly. He kept his eyes away because he knew she was hurt. The cabman rang the bell and they all got up to go.

"I wanted to talk to you, Sam," Bessie whispered.

"Tomorrow," Sam answered. "See you in the morning."

He went to his hotel after dropping Jimmy and Mabel and wrote a letter to Gerald saying that the country was fundamentally sound and that business was not really as bad as every one said.

Next day Sam cleaned up his work in Cleveland. Two buyers were out of the city but he sold the Strand and Harry LaSalle, and Bessie gave him an unusually large order.

"Now, Sam, don't feel bad if the merchandising manager cuts down this order. I'll try to put it through but he may cut it. I ordered three times the stuff I got from Krauter's man, and we could have sold it. It's lovely stuff. But they chopped the order all to pieces. It's hard buying for a department store." She leaned on one elbow and tapped the table with a pencil. "I'm going to miss you terribly, Sam. You know that, don't you? I want you to promise to write to me."

They were in one of the buyer's offices. The door was open but very few people passed it. Bessie got up and walked around to Sam. "I want you to know how fine I think you are, Sam."

"You're a wonderful girl, Bessie. The best fellow I know. I hope you get along fine."

"Oh, Sam." She raised her right hand to her mouth, as though to stop herself from saying something she might regret.

"Well, I'll have to say good-by," Sam said. He held out his hand. Bessie squeezed it in hers. Sam didn't know whether he should kiss her good-by or not. He and Bessie had never done more than hold hands and exchange a few light-hearted kisses. He leaned over her and she pushed her face against his and kissed him.

"I'll miss you, Sam."

"Me too," Sam said. "But I'll be seeing you before long."

"When do you leave, can't I see you off?"

"Well, listen, Bessie, here's the idea. I haven't got Harry's order yet. I've got to see him at the hotel tonight to get it and then I'll have to rush off to the night boat at the last minute. I don't suppose we ought to arrange that because it wouldn't work out very good."

"I'm sorry," Bessie said. "Well, good-by." Sam kissed her again.

He and Harry had dinner together at the hotel but the order was already safe in Sam's pockets when he had said good-by to Bessie.

In Detroit Sam found a letter from Gerald waiting for him at the hotel. Gerald's room mate, Patterson Dickey, had quit school and would not graduate. The bank of which his father was vice-president had failed and Mr. Dickey was under indictment. The son left school with all his belongings as soon as he heard about it. Gerald also wrote that two of his classmates in the engineering college had signed up to go to Russia on jobs right after graduation. "That's something I would like to do," Gerald wrote.

Sam got very little business out of Detroit. The jewelers were afraid to buy when the automobile business was so badly hit. From Detroit he went down to Toledo and stopped at the old Wendall Hotel where he had been going for years. There were two newer and better hotels in the city, but Sam liked Joe Randall, the manager of the Wendall, and always stopped there.

The bellboy showed him to his room and took the tip.

"Anything else you would like today, sir?" he asked.

"No liquor today," Sam said.

He undressed and went to bed. The locked door connecting his room with the next was opposite his bed. He saw a pin point of light coming through it. Sam went over and applied his eye to the small hole. He got a good view of the next room. A man was reading the evening paper there.

Sam felt that it was pretty low of hotel guests to make those holes in the doors on the chance of seeing something worthwhile in the adjoining room. He found them in practically all of the second-class hotels he stopped at. No sooner would the hotel get them stuffed up with putty and paint than some fellow would be along with a small drill and make a new one. On a previous trip Sam had gotten a good view of a couple of chorus girls but wearing more than they would have worn on the stage. The new hotels seldom had connecting rooms so Sam could not get indignant about peep-holes in them.

Toledo was a complete washout as far as business was concerned. One buyer was away, another refused to look at the line and the third was going out of business. Laurie's, who were quitting, had been one of the best stores in town and Frank Laurie and Sam were good friends.

"I'm sorry you're going out of business, Frank," Sam said. "But that's about what I'm doing, I mean I'm retiring. I'm going to begin having a good time."

"I don't suppose I'll have such a good

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time, Sam. I've sunk about everything into this business and I've got to give it up. The chain stores and the credit businesses have run us into the ground. Toledo is all shot anyhow. My brother and I decided to get out, we'll stand to lose quite a lot."

"That's tough, Frank. Damn it, I don't understand what's wrong with business."

"Overproduction, Sam, that's all. Too much prosperity. We get used to high speed and high pressure and we can't stand a let up. The country has to get used to running on a slower and less profitable basis. There's too much competition now. Everybody cutting prices, my God, that's what does it."

"Yes, look at wheat. They'll have to burn it up, I heard. Too much. They're building warehouses to store the surplus."

"Yes, and there are plenty of people would like a loaf of bread."

"Well, it's a tough situation," Sam said.

"My brother and I may start up again one of these days. If we do I'll handle Marvin watches. It's a good line," Laurie said.

Sam went up to Jackson, Michigan, to call on the buyer of a chain store. The buyer told him he was going to New York in three weeks and would go over the line in the office of the firm there. "I've got orders not to buy a thing now anyhow. I wrote Bernstein yesterday when I got your card. I'm sorry you had to make the trip up here for nothing, but I'll be in the office in New York."

"Oh, that's all right with me, just so you buy the line when you're in the city." Sam had told Abe Bernstein that Martin ought to make Jackson because he worked all around it. But Abe knew Sam could squeeze more business out of the chain store than Martin could so he had talked him into including it on his route list.

Sam went to the hotel and wrote a letter to Bernstein telling him how bad business was and that it was foolish for him to have made Jackson. It relieved him a little. He was beginning to feel the strain of the trip and with business slow it was humdrum. Over and over the same, calling on buyers, stopping at standardized hotels, hurrying to trains, occasionally a day of good business but then a couple of days when business was slow. Sam was getting anxious for the trip to be over but he still wanted to get all the business out of it he could. It would be a relief to step aboard the train in Pittsburgh after making his last call and feel that he was through with selling for good.

He went to a movie. He had seen the comedy and newsreels in Detroit but he sat through the whole thing manfully. He read the evening paper and looked at the stock-market reports. A. T. and T. was down but it didn't worry Sam. He was an investor, not a speculator, and as long as dividends were paid the ups and downs of the market meant little to him. He had lost only on paper in the last stock-market crash. An editorial on the financial page quoted a prediction that the market would hit a new low after July. The editorial writer said the prophecy was ridiculous because signs of better times were already on the horizon.

He got a lower on a late train to Chicago and slept soundly. Sam took a room at the Palmer House in Chicago next morning. It was Sunday. Martin had left a note saying he was at the Congress Hall. Sam decided to put off seeing him until the next night. It was tough to have to fire a fellow with a wife and two young kids when times were so bad.

He bought a Sunday paper, took it to his room, undressed, and in bed turned the pages over. He was tired and the headlines confused him but he stuck at it. He read the papers regularly on account of Gerald. He wanted to keep up on events and not seem an old fogy to his son. Since the day Gerald had showed him the contradictions that could be found in a paper, peace conferences on one page and bigger armament appropriations on the next, it was almost as good as a cross-word puzzle.

In Gerald's last letter he had enclosed two clippings pasted on a sheet of paper, one was an account of a business-club banquet where the chief speaker urged more buying as a patriotic duty and the other a report on the nation-wide wage cuts in offices as well as workshops. Over it, Gerald had written in blue pencil, "American Efficiency," and underneath, "Funny Stories for the little children, story 1." Sam laughed at it but from then on it was a little harder to pull his line about buying more goods and stocking up heavily in order to increase business.

He wished he and Gerald were out of it right now, wading up some trout stream with not a thing to do but get the pan good and hot and drop those speckled beauties in one by one. His mouth watered at the thought and he let the paper fall aside. He could smell the pines, the pungent coffee, see the flash of water as the trout rose fighting. The picture soothed him, he reached up, pulled out his light and at once fell asleep.

He was up at eleven and had lunch in the main dining-room. Sunday was a dreary day on the road. Sam knew people in Chicago, but he didn't want to call them up and possibly have to sit through some family party. He bought more papers and looked at the photogravure section and in the afternoon he went to a symphony concert. He went to the concert in much the same way he had gone to church as a boy. It was almost a sacred duty with him and he got a kind of feeling of peace out of it. His wife had loved music and had tried hard to make Sam care for it as she did. He could see her now at a concert, leaning forward a little in the seat, her lips parted, her cheeks pink with excitement, he could see the way her soft brown hair slipped down into the knot behind and when she listened she had a way of pushing at her hair as if it was in her way. He had to admit that when it came to opera he felt pretty much as Gerald did. There was something ludicrous about it but if he shut his eyes and heard nothing but the music, he saw his wife and the way her eyes used to blaze when she turned and looked at him. It was too bad the boy didn't take after his mother more in the way she had loved music. Sam had done all he could to instill it into Gerald. Gerald never would learn to play the piano, he had called it sissy and in Sam's heart he couldn't blame him.

It was only that he wanted to do by the boy as she would have wanted. She wanted him to be more than a business man and he was going to have his chance at all that. The trip he was giving the boy would be fulfilling a kind of sacred obligation, in a way. Sam thought that music rested him and he

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shut his eyes now and listened for the violin. His wife had cared particularly for the violin. When the concert was over he slipped the programme into his pocket from force of habit. But he no longer sent them to Gerald as he used to do.

In the evening Sam wrote letters and went to a movie. Next morning Clarence Rosner was the first customer he called on. He sold the six biggest accounts in Chicago, the rest were made by Martin, who also made Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, and part of Ohio. This was the cream of the country for jewelry but Martin's chances to make real money were spoiled because Sam made the cities where the best accounts in that territory were located. Martin worked steadily but was not a brilliant salesman. The main point in his favor was good appearance and plenty of perseverance.

Rosner greeted Sam saying that he thought Chicago was worse hit by the depression than any other city.

"They are all about alike," Sam said, "only I believe Detroit is about as bad hit as any."

Rosner bought a small order of goods and he and Sam had lunch together. He asked Sam out to his apartment that night but Sam said he would be busy and couldn't make it. Then Rosner insisted he must come out and see the family before he left Chicago.

The memory of the farewells in Cleveland, Detroit, and other cities along the line gave Sam the idea that he would rather not spend an evening at the Rosners'. On some of his calls lately he had not told the buyer it was his last trip. It made conversation that had ceased to be interesting. And some of the buyers openly showed resentment as soon as they learned he had money enough to retire on.

He sold an order of goods to Florence Winsted, who bought for one of the big department stores. Sam liked her and thought she favored him over most of the salesmen who called on her. He got her order and left the store without telling her it was his last trip.

The afternoon was well along so he went back to the hotel. There was a letter for him from Bernstein telling him to be sure and fire Martin.

Already Bernstein was taking the responsibility off Sam's hands. Sam always hired the men and decided when to fire them. It was as if he had already left the firm. The letter irritated Sam to the point that he decided to protest. It made him impatient to finish up his trip and he resented the premature loss of authority in the firm's business.

He telephoned Martin to meet him in the lobby for dinner.

They went to Sam's room after dinner. It was on the court and when Sam unlocked the door Martin said, "Wait a minute. Don't turn on the light." Sam waited and Martin hurried to the window and looked out at the opposite side of the court.

"Come here, Sam, come over here." A woman opposite on the floor below had forgotten to close her curtain and as she combed her hair at the mirror the two of them watched her. She was dressed in a silk singelette and looked very provoking.

"I'll be damned," Sam said.

"I never turn on the light till I take a look," Martin said.

"I never thought of it."

"I've seen some of the damnedest things, Sam. Look at her." Suddenly the woman turned to the window and slammed down the curtain. "Hell, she must have had a hunch we were looking at her," Martin said.

Sam pulled down his curtain and turned the light on. He thought he knew why Martin was not selling the stuff he ought to. Half of the boys on the road were like that, always on the lookout.

"Well, Martin, I don't know. Bernstein is raising hell because the sales department isn't selling the stuff."

"It's terrible," Martin said.

"Well, listen, Martin, here's the idea, Bernstein has the idea we would do better with another man in your territory."

"So you're going to give me the can, hey?"

"No, just a minute, don't get up in the air. Here's the idea. I'm going to talk to him and give him your side. I know you work hard, Martin. I don't want to fire you. But I want to let you know that Bernstein wants more results. I know you can do it, you can sell the stuff."

"I sure plug the line hard," Martin said. "I hate to get the works now. My wife and kids are up in Benton and I've got to get money for them."

"Well, you aren't going to lose your job, big boy," Sam said. "Only, now take my advice. I'll be out of the office. Work hard and send in letters to Bernstein every day. Tell him what you do each day. That'll let him see how you are working. And another thing, Martin, damn it, it's none of my business, but now take like going to the window to look at that floosey. You oughtn't to do that, you got a family. It isn't like a single man, and that sort of stuff never got a man ahead, Martin."

Sam stopped talking for a moment and looked at the floor. Martin also looked at the floor.

"It isn't any of my business," Sam said. "Jees, when I was younger I played around with women, I drank like a fish, but damn it, it never got me anywheres. You can't do it. You go in any of these old hotels and they are full of peep holes in the doors. If you ask me, that's one of the causes why goods isn't being sold the way it ought to be. Too many salesmen are wasting their time that way."

"Sure," Martin said. "I don't do that sort of thing as a general rule. Only when you have a picture in front of you, you look at it. I don't chase around with women and I'm no boozer. You know that."

"I wouldn't have said anything about it," Sam said. "Only you know how it is."

"Sure, Sam, don't get me wrong. I work steady at the job and I work hard."

"That's the idea. Well, I've got to write some letters tonight, Martin. Just go to it and sell the stuff." Sam gave Martin two new samples, they said good-by and wished each other good luck.

Going down on the elevator Martin was thinking what a fool he had been to suggest taking a look out of the window at that woman. When he was in the lobby he piped a good-looking girl and sauntered slowly past her, turning his head as he advanced. She didn't give him a rise.

Sam wrote to Bernstein, that after talking to Martin he had determined it was to the best interest of the firm to keep him. He knew his customers and was doing as well as any man could considering the times. He told Abe to

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hold on to him another year. It would cost money to change the men in that territory just then. "I know what I'm talking about, Abe, you'll see my point when I get a chance to talk it over with you. I know more about the selling end of the business than you do, don't forget that. It would be a big mistake to let Martin go." That would show Abe where he stood, Sam figured.

The next day Sam cleaned up his business in Chicago and got nothing but small orders. He went in to say good-by to Clarence Rosner.

"I'm sorry, Clarence, I won't be able to get out to the house this trip, but I'll bring my boy out here one of these days. We'll be on the go all the time. I want you to meet my son."

"Gee, Sam, it isn't fair for you to run off like this without getting out to the house. The Mrs. will feel bad."

"I'm sorry, Clarence, honestly, but I've got to hurry this last trip and get back and get everything cleaned up."

"We're going to miss you, Sam."

"I'll be seeing you again. I'm only retiring on the doctor's orders."

"I wish to God I was retiring," Rosner said.

After Sam left he felt somewhat the unfairness of the fact that he could stop work and live on his income while most of his friends had to keep on at the daily grind. He decided not to tell his customers if he could help it.

He took a Pullman from Chicago to Minneapolis. On the train he read an evening paper. The German chancellor predicted internal strife if Germany did not receive outside aid. An Indiana school-teacher found murdered in lonely wood. An editorial on the Fish committee report said that Chicago harbored a nest of communists intent upon overthrowing the government. Exposure of the activities was needed. Sam thought he should warn Gerald to talk less about his ideas. It wasn't so bad to have ideas of that kind but a person should keep them to himself. Newport society was preparing for a gala season. The farm board's attempt to help the starving southern farmers might succeed if people would agree to cut down production.

Sam went to bed with a feeling that all was not well in the world, but he knew before he finally fell asleep that things were bound to work themselves out. There was no use thinking about the stuff in the papers too much, tomorrow there would be a whole new set of news.

In the morning, in Minneapolis, he went to the hotel and took a room on the day rate. It was just possible he could clean up the business in St. Paul and Minneapolis in one day and get out that night. There was mail waiting for him from Gerald, Anna, and Bernstein. He put the mail in his pocket and went to breakfast. He was glad Gerald's letter was long because he always got a great kick out of his boy's letters. They were serious too and made him think. He decided to wait until he had the leisure to enjoy the letter fully before opening it. After a hard day's work a letter from Gerald was as good as seeing a show. It would fill a whole evening.

He read the morning paper at breakfast. In the taxi going to St. Paul he read Bernstein's letter. He had very little interest in Anna's, he could look it over any old time. Bernstein enclosed a bill for Sam to collect from a St. Louis jeweler who was very slow pay. It was getting harder to make the jewelers pay their bills when due.

When he finished selling his St. Paul customer a measly little order he found Larry Cowles, an alarm-clock salesman, waiting outside the office with his sample case.

"Where are you staying, Sam?" Larry asked.

"The Nicollet."

"Me too. Let's have dinner tonight. I'll meet you at the hotel."

"Fine, about six, Larry."

"Is Jenkins buying anything today?" Larry asked.

"I got a nice little order from him," Sam said. "Yes, he gave me a pretty good order. You can sell him alarm clocks."

Larry picked up his case and walked into the office. Sam went out of the store. He had not told Jenkins this was his last trip and he felt good about it. It was no use always reminding himself that he was at a turning point in his life. There were two more slow-paying customers in St. Paul that Sam decided to pass up. His successor could see them in the fall. Anyway Jenkins did about all of the business in the city and he wasn't buying anything to speak of.

He took a bus back to Minneapolis. Rothman was not in his store, and Helen Kreitz, who bought for a department store, was going over a salesman's line when he got there. He waited around for a while, looked at his watch. He wondered who was selling Miss Kreitz. It looked as if he would have to stay overnight for sure. In about ten minutes she appeared.

After Sam sold Miss Kreitz, he saw Rothman and got his order. The business he was doing would little better than pay expenses. Rothman said he was a lucky stiff to be able to get out of business at this time. He said if there was any way he could do it and keep his head above water he would.

There were two more customers in Minneapolis. Sam was showing the line to one of them when the buyer got a telephone call that his baby was very sick. He hurriedly left the store. Sam closed up his case and went to the hotel.

He went to his room and feeling a little tired decided to take a warm bath and then sit down and enjoy Gerald's letter. After his bath he put on his underwear, trousers, and socks, left his graying hair uncombed and sat down on the bed edge to read his letters. He got up from there and carried the letters over to the big easy chair in the corner of the room. He made a ritual of reading Gerald's letters. He tossed the letter from Anna onto the table and slit the back of Gerald's with a pencil.

Sam was not prepared for bad news. He read a few sentences and began to have a hollow feeling in his stomach. He got up and walked with the letter in his right hand to his coat. With his left hand he took out a cigar and fumbled somewhat getting the cellophane wrapping off. He had to lay the letter down to light the cigar.

He puffed on it violently and sat down again with the letter. I've been a parasite all my life have I? The boy had everything any boy could want. Sam read some more of the letter. You won't travel around with me. You'll throw your life away. You'll go to Russia to work as a laboring man. Sam's eyes clouded and the cigar smoke was blue and hot. He bit hard on his cigar and had to spit the end out onto the floor.

Sam felt weak and it was difficult to see the sentences. What he wanted was a stiff drink of whiskey but he had none in the room.

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He put the letter down without finishing it. He felt sure he had an attack coming on. His heart was beating fast for a few beats and then seemed to stop for a few seconds before it started up again. He went over to the bed and stretched out. His heartbeat was even again. His forehead was sweaty and his fingers trembled.

He was glad Larry Cowles would be coming if he was going to be sick. A hotel room was a horrible place to be sick in. Alone and confronted with the possibility of serious illness he was terror stricken. But slowly as he lay back on the bed he began to feel his heart resume its normal beating.

He got up and walked to the bathroom. His legs were shaky. He washed his face with ice water from the tap. It bucked him up. He combed his hair carefully, then put on a clean white shirt and a rather loud striped tie. His face seemed pale in the mirror. When Sam finished dressing he sat down. The letter was in front of him but he didn't pick it up. Dressing had distracted him but when he sat down he again felt the deep hurt of being let down by his son. Gerald's saying he would cast his life with the working masses in their struggle for freedom from the exploitation of capitalism held no meaning for Sam. He was bewildered, it seemed that he had lived his whole life for nothing.

He didn't have long to brood about it. Larry Cowles knocked on the door.

"Come in, is that you, Larry?" Sam said.

"Yes, how's things, Sam?"

"Say, Larry, damn it, you know I'm sick. I've got one of those attacks, the heart. I haven't got any liquor. Do you know where I can get some?"

"Sure, I know a druggist, a customer of mine, he bootlegs the stuff. Prescription stuff."

Larry telephoned the druggist and ordered a quart to be sent immediately to Sam's room. He had to explain who he was before the druggist remembered the alarm-clock salesman.

Sam sat moodily hunched up in his chair. He looked much older than fifty to Larry. "The road's too strenuous for you, Sam," Larry said.

"This is my last trip, Larry, the doctor's orders. Only that isn't it. Say, Larry, what does a man do when his whole life goes to hell, I mean if there's anything he wants, you know, and all of a sudden everything goes all blooey?"

"You didn't fall for the stock market, did you? You haven't been cleaned out, have you?"

"No, hell no, Larry. It's worse than that."

"Well, there's plenty of people broke these days. I just thought maybe that was it."

"Do you believe things will ever be like Russia here in this country, I mean is anything likely to happen so the country will go that way?"

"Are you nuts, Sam? For God's sake. Russia is getting just like here. That's what they're doing over there, just copying us. In a few years they'll have it just the same way. Stalin will get a lot of dough and be Morgan there and a few other fellows the same. It'll work out just like that. We got the only government in the world."

That was too thick even for Sam. He knew Larry couldn't give him any consolation.

"You haven't got any kids have you, Larry?"

"Not that I know of, have you got your tail in a sling? I mean are you in trouble with some gal, Sam?"

"You don't understand, Larry. Jees I feel terrible."

"Maybe you ought to get a doctor up."

"No, I'll take a drink, that may straighten me up."

Larry was bored by the sick man but the thought of the whiskey on the way to the room gave him the incentive to be cheerful and helpful. "Is there anything I could do for you, Sam?"

"Just stick around, Larry. Pardon me a second, Larry, I want to look at this letter." Sam picked up Anna's letter and started reading it. "I shouldn't ever have let Anna come in and bring up the boy. I should have hired a nurse."

"I don't get you, Sam, at all."

"Well, the idea is, Larry: my boy, he gets out of college this June. We were going around the world together for a couple of years before he went to work. It was all set. He's got a job waiting for him with the best construction company in Philadelphia. He's studying engineering. Well, he's gone ahead without consulting me and is all signed up to go to Russia. I don't mind giving up the trip with him although I've looked forward to it for years. It's his ideas. He's got radical ideas, regular Bolshevik ideas. If he believes in that, it makes everything I've worked for seem wrong. What I've worked for is nothing to him. He throws it all aside. It's only in his way. It doesn't help him. I'm no use to him, like I wanted to be. I'm a hindrance. He'll go his way. I'm just out of the picture, something to be cast aside. It's like losing my son."

"Engineers make big money over there. It ought to be all right," Larry said.

"Money hasn't anything to do with this. I had plenty of money for the boy and he doesn't want it. It's no good to him. He wants something I don't know anything about. Yes, Larry, I haven't anything left. I lost my wife when the boy was born. If that hadn't happened he would have been all right." He felt tears form in his eyes and sat hunched over in his chair wiping them with a clean blue-bordered handkerchief.

"Jesus, Larry, I feel just like crying."

"Well, Sam, it's a damn shame but it isn't as bad as you think it is. You shouldn't let a thing like that get the best of you."

"You don't understand, Larry. Anna here, that's my sister, she could have stopped it. Why she didn't want my wife and me to get married. When we did she never wrote to me for over a year. She went out to Lancaster and stayed with a cousin for a year. Then when my wife dies she comes around and wants to make everything all right. I said sure. She came in and sort of brought up the boy and she encouraged him to be headstrong."

"Well, Sam, if you ask me, you're taking this too much to heart. You've got money, haven't you? You should worry. Don't let yourself get upset. Let him go to Russia. He'll get his belly full of it. He'll be sick of it soon enough."

The liquor was delivered and Sam paid out eight dollars for the quart. Larry ordered up ginger ale and ice. Sam drank his with cold water and the first drink was a small one. The next was stiff. After the second Sam had to wipe his eyes regularly. Larry was bored and drank fast. Sam sat quietly thinking. Conversation died out. Finally Larry couldn't stand it any longer.

"Well, Sam, I got to run along. You'll be all right in the morning. Get some

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sleep, that's the idea. If I were you I'd go right to bed and get some good sleep."

Sam was relieved to have Larry go. The alarm-clock man wasn't able to give him a bit of real consolation. When he was out of the room Sam filled his glass half full of whiskey, poured in a little water, and swallowed it down.

His eyes were blurred and he tried to read Gerald's letter again. The words ran together and it was hopeless. His head felt clear and he thought he was not drunk but he couldn't read the letter. He took one more stiff drink and went to bed. He fell asleep immediately.

Joe Marple, jewelry, boarded the Omaha Express in Minneapolis early Sunday morning with a hangover. He had a seat in the one chair car and sat there slightly shaky from too little sleep and too much hooch. When the train started the jolting and motion lessened the feeling of hangover and Joe took *Liberty* from his bag and started reading. A half hour was all he could hold out. He went into the smoking-compartment carrying a pint flask in his hip pocket. In the then empty room he took a pull at the flask and felt immediately better. He sat down for a smoke. The country outside the window was flat and uninteresting to Joe.

Pearl necklaces had become a thing of the past. He couldn't sell more than enough to pay expenses and earn an average of forty a week. Sam MacHenry walked into the smoking-compartment.

"For God sake, Sam, what are you doing on this train?" Joe asked.

"Hello, Joe, how are things?"

"Slow, Sam, damn slow. I heard you were three days ahead of me this trip. Rothman told me you were in Minneapolis three days ago."

"I was sick, I had to lay over a couple of days there."

"Going to Omaha?"

"Yes, then Kansas City, St. Louis, and back," Sam said.

"Me too. Maybe we can travel together for a while."

Sam looked out of the window, silent, becoming pensive. He said,

"Sure, Joe. You know I've been pretty much broke up, Joe. It's my boy. I gave him the best any man could but he's gotten hold of some crazy ideas. He always had anything a boy could want."

"Say, Sam, I been hearing all along the line about you. Damn near everybody's been telling me you're quitting the game after this trip. Is there anything in it?"

"Yes, there is. I was feeling all hopped up about it. I'm retiring. But you know, the more I think of it, the nearer the time comes to kick over the traces, I don't know. Maybe it's a mistake."

"I wish I could kiss the road goodby," Joe said.

"It isn't that. Only here's the way it is. My son gets out of college pretty soon now. I was taking him over to Europe, Paris, and all that. I want to give him the best, he can have anything he wants, that's what I've been working all my life for. Only here's the thing, Joe. The boy's got in with some bad influences. I think it's those dippy professors in college. He was always talking about socialism and communism and those things and I took it all right. I thought he'd get over it. Everybody gets ideas like that when they're young. But here's what upset me in Minneapolis. I had one of those attacks there. It's just nervousness. The doctor in Minneapolis told me that. Only I swear I thought I was going to die. I was sick as the devil."

"That's tough, Sam. You had one of those attacks at the Palmer House two years ago when we were there. Maybe you need some kind of an operation."

"No, I don't need an operation. The doctors all say rest, have a good time, that's what I need. That's one of the main reasons I'm throwing the road over."

"That's tough, Sam," Joe said. Joe's forehead became furrowed, his lips tut-tutted, he looked worried. He hoped he never would have such attacks.

"Yes, but as I was telling you, the boy wrote me a long letter. It hurt me. He's an awful strong-minded boy. He always was. When he was a baby he was. If he wanted anything he got it. Of course, it was my sister spoiled him, she always gave in to him. If his mother had of lived it would be different."

"What did he do?" Joe asked. "I mean that letter from him. Has he got in dutch some way?"

"No, Joe, it isn't like that. Only here's the idea. He writes me flat. He won't go to Europe with me, he don't want to go to Florida fishing next winter, he don't want to travel around with me at all. I offered to take him around the world. You see I figure when a boy gets out of college he ought to have a couple of years to sort of get acclimated to the world. Travel broadens a person. And then he can settle down to business."

"Sure, travel is a great thing," Joe said. "I get more out of buying up the pearls there in France than anything. And I always have a good time there in Paris too. It does a man good."

"Well, Joe, would you believe it? I've never been out of the United States. I never went to college. I learned what I know myself, reading and like that. But I figured, and when I got married my wife and I said the boy was going to have a chance. My wife was a very cultivated woman. She read all the time, I don't know how many books, and she was good at the piano. She taught lessons up until we were married. After we were married I didn't want her to do that. But I got her a Steinway grand piano and she used to play the piano at home there. Of course I lost her when the boy was born. I really just have plugged along to set the boy up and sort of give him all the stuff we older fellows didn't get so easily when we started out."

"Well, Sam, I started to work for Bulova in the stock room when all they handled was bracelets. Those old-fashioned gold ones. They're a thing of the past. I was twelve. I been at it ever since. Of course, I made a little money. I don't have to worry." Joe did worry. His wife had just written him that if he didn't earn more money they would simply have to move up to the Bronx. Imitation pearl necklaces, his mainstay, were also becoming a thing of the past.

"I don't worry about the money, Joe, it's the boy. I never should have let my sister come in to take care of him. She coddled him and made him headstrong. What do you think of this? The boy says he is going to Russia right after school is out and work like a common laborer. What got me, he says he is going to devote his life to the cause of labor. He says I'm a parasite. I hate to tell you, Joe, but I've got to tell somebody. I've worked steady since I was a kid. I never got to be salesmanager by loafing and I've got a pretty fair interest in the firm too. And I earned it by hard work. And now what gets me, Joe, I

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tell you it hurts me inside, just when I'm retiring something like this comes along. I've got to get back and talk to the boy. He says there isn't anything can stop him. He's got money saved out of his allowance and he's signed papers and everything. But I've got to talk with him. There's no use him throwing his life away."

"I don't think he's serious, Sam," Joe said. "You take any socialist and give him ten dollars and he isn't a socialist any more. Get him over to Paris and take him around. That'll give him the right slant on things."

"Well, that was my idea, only I'm afraid it won't work out. That boy, once he says he is going to do something, I don't know how you can stop him."

"Don't worry about it. You don't look any too good today, Sam."

"I feel pretty low. I haven't got the strength I ought to have."

"Would you like a little nip out of my flask?" Joe Marple reached for the flask and handed it to Sam. "There ain't anybody in here, take a shot. It'll fix you up."

"Thanks, Joe, I will. I drank too much the other night with Larry Cowles. He sells alarm clocks."

"I don't know him," Joe said.

Sam raised the flask and took a swig. "That helps," Sam said.

"A little liquor is all right," Joe said. "I was drinking with Rothman last night. He didn't know you were in town or we'd have looked you up."

"I didn't tell anybody I was there. I didn't feel like it. What do you think is going to happen in the world, Joe?"

"Same old thing. If business doesn't pick up we'll all have to go into bootlegging."

"There may be something in what Gerald says, only I can't believe it. You can't ever convince me that working all my life the way I have is being a parasite."

"Did he call you a parasite? I'd spank his bottom," Joe said.

"No, not that exactly, he only said that selling was a parasitical occupation. Of course it amounts to about the same thing. But did you know that over half the retail cost of an article goes into selling it, advertising and selling? See, he says that isn't right."

"Well, what of it, Sam, as long as you make the money?"

"I haven't got much heart to finish the trip. What'll I do? Here I am quitting the job. All dressed up and no place to go."

"Have another drink, Sam," Joe said. Sam refused but Joe took a drink. Then he looked out of the window. Sam opened the newspaper. Later they had lunch together. There were only seven people in the chair car and Sam and Joe had the smoking-compartment to themselves most of the time. One man came in and smoked a cigarette but both Sam and Joe acted as if the fellow wasn't there. Sam read the predictions for a bumper wheat crop. Unemployment had reached a new high level. Joe looked out intently at the flat farm country. The man got up and left when his cigarette was finished.

Joe leaned over to Sam. "Did you ever make that town, Sioux City?"

"When I sold findings," Sam said. "I was just starting out then."

"Jees but this country out here makes me sick. No business, nothing. I'm about ready to throw over the business. I can't make money any more, damn it. I got a fine line of pearls, they're as good as any on the market, but I can't sell them. What's the matter with the people? They don't seem to want pearls any more."

"Watches are pretty slow too, now," Sam said.

"I used to clean up," Joe said.

"Why don't you quit it, go into something else if you don't like it?"

"What could I go into? Anyway I like the road."

"I'm getting tired of it," Sam said.

"Well, it isn't a bad life. You kiss the wife good-by and get away for a while. You get a little freedom. I like it all right."

When they got to Omaha there wasn't a taxi at the station. Truck drivers were on strike and the taxi men were out in sympathy. When Joe and Sam were on the street car going to the hotel, Sam had a worried look on his face. He hugged his sample case carefully between his legs.

"That looks bad, Joe, when there's a strike. Somebody might bump a fellow on the head and run off with the samples."

"Oh, that's no strike, Sam. Tomorrow it'll be off. The taxis will be begging you to ride with them."

"Sure, only it's things like that make you think. That's what happens. A lot of strikes start up and all that and then it works itself out until something happens and then finally it works itself out into something real like, for instance, the way it did in Russia." Sam couldn't bring himself to use the word revolution.

"Say, Sam, I never saw a fellow like you," Joe said. "That's nothing. I've seen some big strikes in my life. Thousands of people striking. Look at the garment makers. I've seen them. Why listen here, Sam, I'll tell you what comes of it. Nothing ever comes of it. I never saw such a fellow. You need a drink, Sam."

"I don't know, Joe. Look at the newspapers. Things are bad."

"That don't mean a thing, Sam."

They got a double room together and after dinner had a couple of drinks. "I'm afraid I'll be sick again tomorrow," Sam said. "Drinking even a little sort of knocks me out for a couple of days."

"We'll get some more tomorrow. That'll fix you up. Drink plenty of water now, three or four glasses, and you won't feel anything tomorrow."

Sam took four soda-mint tablets and drank three glasses of water. Next morning he had a headache and complained that his heart wasn't beating right. He dragged himself out of bed, took a bath, and dressed. He had had his clothes pressed during the night. Joe and Sam had breakfast together. Sam bought two morning newspapers. German situation becoming serious. Sam thought he ought to write to Gerald. But he wasn't sure what to say in the letter and it would not be long before he would see his son. He went to call on his main account in Omaha. Joe went to see a smaller jeweler. They wanted to finish up that morning and get the afternoon train to Kansas City. Sam's first customer was out of town but would be back next day. He went to the Louvre Jewelry Store where Joe was trying to sell the buyer. Joe got a flat turn down.

Sam told Joe the other jeweler was out of town until next day. Joe's face fell. "Are you going to wait over and see him, Sam? I've got to," Joe said. "I can't pass him up."

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"I'm passing him up," Sam said. "I'm going on, Joe. I got to get back to New York. I'll meet you at the hotel when I get through here."

Sam sold a few watches to the buyer at the Louvre and went back to the hotel. Joe had a fresh quart of gin he had bought from a bellhop.

"Well, as much as I hate to, I guess I'll have to get tight all over again," Joe said.

"I don't feel like it," Sam said.

Joe urged him and Sam took a drink. He felt better and took another. It made him feel tight.

"A fellow can't go on like this, Joe, drinking and getting a hangover and then drinking to get over it."

"You have to taper off," Joe said, and took another drink.

Sam got out of Omaha on the afternoon train. He felt a little tight and watched his sample case very carefully and insisted on keeping it in his own hand when boarding the train. He let the porter carry the gladstone bag. In his seat he slumped down and closed his eyes. He could feel the strong pumping of his heart, beating faster than he ever felt it before. His face was hot and dry. He had no power to move his arms and his hands felt swollen and stiff.

The train was going fast and the chair car was dusty. The porter noticed Sam's hat fallen from his lap and stooped over to pick it up. Sam sat motionless, dozing. The train moved steadily on and on. At Falls City some of the passengers got off. No one came into the car.

At Atchison the train came to an unusually abrupt stop, jarring up the passengers. Sam awoke suddenly and caught himself from falling over the arm of the chair. He felt better and had sobered up. But when he made the effort to move his chair around to give his legs more room he realized that his energy was at a low ebb.

The train was dirty and dust was thick on the window sills. The view out of the window at the overcast sky and the dingy buildings near the railroad yards depressed Sam. He saw a group of workmen replacing worn ties on the switch track. They worked steadily with a rugged rhythm. The boss foreman standing near the group was looking at the train. He watched it as it pulled out of the station. The workmen glanced up from their work as the train passed. Sam tried to picture himself working as these men were working. Gerald wanted to do just such a thing. There was no rhyme or reason in such foolishness. Sam closed his eyes again, the world was upside down.

In Kansas City he went to his room and ordered dinner sent up to him. After he ate he took a bath, sent his clothes down to be pressed and went to bed. He lay there for a while thinking he would soon fall asleep but he grew more and more awake. If he continued to feel so depressed he would cut out the rest of his trip and go directly to New York from St. Louis.

He got up and swallowed two aspirin tablets. They put him to sleep. Next morning Sam felt better than he had for days but it was raining and dark outside and he was still sleepy. He turned over in bed and slept until noon. To miss a morning's work now seemed of no importance to him.

Even after shaving and dressing in his fresh-pressed suit Sam realized that his appearance was far seedier than usual. The hotel was beginning to get run down. His room looked dingy. Sam remembered when this hotel was new and elegant. Not many years had been needed to make it second rate.

He ate lunch sitting at the counter in the coffee shop. He didn't want to wait around in the almost empty dining room for service.

His sample case pulled on his arm harder than it ever had. For an instant the idea crossed his mind that there was no use trying to sell his customers in Kansas City. He turned toward the hotel lobby. To hell with it all, he thought. He sat down on a comfortable davenport in the lobby.

Sam wanted to see a newspaper but not badly enough to make the effort to get up and buy one at the cigar stand. The letters from Gerald and Anna were in his right-hand breast pocket. He covered the outside of the coat with his right hand and started to reach his left in for the letters. His fingers touched the end of one of them. He drew the hand out again, got up from the davenport and asked a boy to get a cab.

He got out of the cab at Kryle's Jewelry Store and walked in. There were two customers in the store. Henry Kryle was waiting on one of them and nodded pleasantly to Sam. Sam set his case down beside a counter up front and looked around the store. The impulse to leave the store came over him but he remained standing there quietly.

Few people were on the streets and a fine misty rain was falling, mixing with the steam coming up from the pavements. The lights were on in Kryle's store, it was a dreary day. Sam felt very listless and when Kryle was through with his customer and called out for Sam to come back to the office, Sam wearily picked up his case and slowly moved to the back of the store.

"Glad to see you, Sam, how are things?" Kryle asked.

"Well, Henry, I don't know if you have heard yet but this is my last trip. I'm retiring. It's the doctor's orders. I don't know what I'll do with myself, but you know I haven't been in any too good health for quite a while."

"That's too bad, Sam. You don't look up to snuff. You'll feel better probably."

"Things look pretty bad, don't they, Henry? I mean business."

"They are bad, Sam. My wife and daughter came back from Europe last week. The daughter was over there studying music in Germany. My, but they say things are bad there. We didn't want the daughter to stay there with things the way they are."

"I read they were getting bad there," Sam said.

"My wife says there's going to be some kind of an upheaval there sure. Everybody is talking about it. Even the good middle-class people. I've got relatives there, belong to the better class of people too, they say they expect something to happen."

"Is that a fact? Sounds like Gerald."

"And the thing of it is, Sam, they don't care. Anything would be better than the way it is now, they told my wife. They always had money, too, but everybody over there is poor now in Germany. Except a few, I guess a pretty small few."

"I didn't have any idea it was that bad. My son talks quite a lot about it. He seems to think there isn't any way out of these depressions unless you change everything. He seems to think

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things are going the way they have in Russia."

"I hope not, Sam."

"So do I. Only maybe it wouldn't be as bad as we think. I don't know much about it. The boy is going over there to Russia after he gets out of school. Sort of look things over."

"He better look out, he may get shot. I wouldn't want to go there now, it's dangerous, I've heard," Kryle said.

"No, he's got papers all signed up. He'll be all right. He's an engineer. Get's out of college in June."

"Well, he'll probably be all right."

"Sure," Sam said.

"Say, Sam, you'll have to stay over tonight. We've got a little poker party organized up at the Mayfair Hotel."

"I thought I would finish up and get out tonight. I'm sort of in a hurry to get back."

"We won't hear of it, Sam. There are five of us, with you it'll be six, we can play stud poker. There's some good booze, too. If this is your last trip you've got to stay over. I'll consider it a personal insult if you don't."

"Well, I'd like to," Sam said. "I'll drop back later in the afternoon and let you know."

"No, it's got to be yes, right now, no monkey business, Sam."

Sam knitted his brows in deep contemplation. He would feel better if he had an evening with the boys. Poker was good relaxation. Henry was a swell fellow.

"Sure, I'll stay over. What's one day? I can go to St. Louis tomorrow."

"Fine, Sam, that's the spirit."

"Well, shall we go through the line?" Sam asked.

"Damn it, Sam, I can't buy much the way things are. I sort of hate to look, but I will."

"Just order what you need," Sam said.

While Sam was selling the goods to Henry he got over the weary listless feeling and talked about his line with enthusiasm. When the order was sold he looked it over. Henry had bought more than he should have and Sam knew it.

"Say, Henry, I don't want to oversell you. How about it? I don't think you'll need so many of Lady Exquisite."

"Let's see, Sam. No, that's right. Cut it in half."

Sam had never done a thing of that kind before. He closed up his case and sat back in his chair. He pulled two cigars from his pocket and gave one to Henry. They lit up.

"I wonder what's going to happen," Sam said.

"Well, you can't tell what might happen. We've been awfully hard hit here. The drought hit us all through here. The fact is we've been suffering from a depression ever since the war, out here. Agriculture was hit, we haven't got enough manufacturing here, that's our trouble. The chamber of commerce is starting a big campaign to advertise Kansas City, but I don't know how much good it will do. Of course, we're in a good natural location. Railroads and all that. Right in the centre of the country practically. But I don't know. Anyhow my business hasn't been running at a loss so far."

"It's funny, Henry, you get south, this far, or Louisville, or Cincinnati, and then on down south, and for the population you sell more jewelry than in the north. The southerners buy it. They gamble too. You fellows gamble more than further north, horse racing, dog racing, all that stuff. The south is good jewelry territory, only the cities are so far apart travelling expenses come high."

"Well, in the South, it's a tradition to treat the women well. Give them presents. Candies and jewelry are both good in the South, Sam. Of course, you're not in the real South now."

"Sure, I know, but Kansas City has got a lot of the characteristics. I'm glad I had a talk with you, Henry. I was worried about my boy. I'm afraid he's one of those radicals."

"We need people with liberal ideas, Sam. We need people who can look the situation in the face. The government has got to give better help to the farmers and the unemployed. I'm radical myself when it comes down to it."

"Well, I wish I could make head or tail out of it," Sam said.

When he got up to leave it was late in the afternoon. The rain was falling heavier. He didn't want to make another call that day. He didn't care whether he sold any more goods or not. Kryle telephoned for a taxicab and Sam had to wait twenty minutes. The taxis were busy on account of the storm. Sam felt moody and depressed. There was something ominous in the air.

The lobby of the hotel was over-decorated and dowdy. He went to his room and turned on all of the lights. He wanted to write to Gerald, he even thought of a few things he might say to show that he wasn't entirely unsympathetic to the boy. But he could see the sentences of Gerald's letter and it just confused him to think of it. That was too much. Sam's temples felt hot and pressed in on his brain. The room gave him the jitters. He felt entirely lonely. He couldn't make himself sit down to write to his son.

He was pacing back and forth in his room, from the window to the hall door. The telephone rang and Joe Marple spoke to him.

"Come on up, Joe," he said. Joe was in the room two minutes later.

"Jees, Sam, I stayed over to see Moore in Omaha and I'll be damned I couldn't sell him a thing. Pearls are a thing of the past."

"There's a poker party tonight. Henry Kryle told me about it. We'll go. He'll want you to go."

"I'll lose all my jack," Joe said.

"Come on, Joe, you don't have to play. They've got some good liquor."

"I've been drinking too much, I've got to straighten up. The Jewish people aren't a drinking people. You never see Jewish fellows getting drunk, not often. Only I've been drunk half of the time this trip. I don't know what's come over me. It's the damn pearls."

"Well, the Scotch like their Scotch. Only I've got to cut it out. I was sick on that train coming down from Omaha. I felt like I was going to pass out for good."

Joe wanted to eat supper in the coffee shop and save money but Sam insisted he have a meal on the Marvin Watch Company. They ate in the main dining-room. They talked gossip about jewelers on their route lists and about other salesmen in the wholesale end of the business. Sam caught himself two or three times about to make a remark about his son or the business depression but held it in. He wanted to quit talking about it if he could. It was too painful. Just thinking of the past few days made him contract his forehead and half close his eyes.

"What's the matter, Sam? Got a headache? Take some aspirin."

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"Yes, just a little headache. It'll go away," Sam said.

After eating, Sam and Joe lit cigars. Sam had been smoking too many, but they eased his mind and soothed his nerves. He bought an evening paper, folded it and stuck it in his pocket. The streets were wet, but the rain had stopped. The two knights of the road sauntered out of their hotel and walked down the street which was fairly crowded. Groups of men stood uneasily in front of cigar stores and pool halls, as if expecting the rain to start up again. It was a warm damp evening.

"Most of those fellows are out of work," Sam said.

"Sure, they've been out of work forever. You couldn't get guys like that to work if you tried."

"Those men don't look like bums, to me," Sam said. "How do you know they're not starving?"

"They'd steal first, before they'd starve."

"You couldn't blame a man if he did," Sam said. "Even the president of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad says he wouldn't starve, he'd steal if he was hungry."

"He wouldn't ever get hungry. Fellows like that can afford to do a lot of talking."

It was seven blocks over to the Mayfair. When they got there they asked the clerk what room Mr. Kryle had taken and went up in the elevator. Henry Kryle and Philip Stuart, who had a half interest in a department store, were in the room. Each had a whiskey highball in his hand. Kryle made two more for Joe and Sam. Sam decided to go very easy, maybe just drink the one drink, nurse it along all evening. He took a swig and then added more ginger ale to fill it to the top of the glass.

A salesman for women's underwear, Jerry Lawson, and Tom Kirby, a shoe man, came into the room.

"Fritz Newberry ought to be here any minute, what do you say we start the game?" Stuart said.

Kryle went over and locked the door. "Don't want anybody coming in by accident. They wouldn't do anything, but it's against the rules," he said.

"Sure, it's always better to lock it."

"No big ante game for me," Joe said.

"We're just playing for the fun of it," Kryle said. "Ten-cent ante, fifty-cent limit."

"You can spend a lot of money playing nickel ante," Joe said.

They started out playing straight poker. Then Fritz Newberry knocked on the door, and got in the game. They were a bunch of good fellows and another round of highballs was served.

Joe lost money at straight, but Sam was ahead of the game. They started playing stud and Joe kept on losing money. Kryle kept the drinks circulating pretty fast and the players began to get an edge on.

Sam played a cautious game and was intent on the cards. He kept his face composed. Joe was no poker player. His face told his hands. Joe got moody, and started grumbling.

"Damn it to hell, business is so damn lousy. I can't sell pearls; they're a thing of the past. Business is a thing of the past, damn it. What to hell are you going to do?"

"Business is good with us," Stuart, the department-store man said. "Cash business is what makes good business. I wouldn't be in any credit business for anything."

"Cash or credit, Stuart, it's all bad, and nobody can say anything else. Look at my pearls, as fine a line of artificial pearls as there is on the market, and prices way low, and I can't sell them. I couldn't give them away hardly. Pearls are a thing of the past, so's business, if you ask me."

"Oh, for Christ sake, pipe down on business. Depression, that's all you hear. I'm sick of it. Forget it," Fritz Newberry said. "It'll never get any better with that kind of talk. Have a good time, play the game, watch your cards."

Sam grew very uneasy with the talk. He was on his third drink and felt it. Instead of getting a lift out of it, he felt sleepy and his sides were perspiring. When Kryle filled the glasses again, Sam asked for a stiff one. "I don't feel right, Henry," he said.

At one o'clock everybody but Joe was ahead of the game. He had lost thirty dollars.

"I've got to quit the game," Joe said. "I'm short of money until my check comes."

"I'll lend you some," Sam said. Kryle said he would also.

"No, I'm going back to the hotel, I've got a big day ahead of me. Big day, that's a good one. Well, Henry, I'll see you in the morning and I warn you, you better buy enough stuff to make up my losses tonight."

"See you in the morning," Kryle said.

"So long, Joe, see you tomorrow," Sam said.

"I can't buy his line," Kryle said. "You can't sell pearls any more. He ought to have a line you can sell."

"He's a good fellow."

"He crabs too much," Jerry Lawson said. "Anybody could crab, only what does it get you? I don't crab. There isn't any use crabbing."

"Well, things are pretty slow," Sam said.

"Let's forget it, play poker," Stuart said.

Sam felt tight and it was hard to watch the cards. Kryle and Newberry began to lose money. Sam was ahead of the game and kept on winning, but it was hard to watch the cards. He felt overpoweringly sleepy.

"I've got to stretch out a minute. I feel sort of sick," he said.

"Hey, you're ahead of the game, you can't drop out now," Newberry said.

Kryle leaned over to Newberry and whispered, "He's a sick man, Newberry." Then he spoke out loud. Sam was slouching in his chair and looked pale. "Go on over and lie down on that bed, Sam."

He got up and went around the table to Sam. Sam slowly dragged himself up from his chair, and Henry walked over to the bed with him.

"I'll be all right in a second," Sam said.

He stumbled forward onto the bed, flat on his belly, and retched. A little water came out of his mouth. All of the men watched him. They thought he was sick to his stomach. Sam turned his head toward Henry.

"It's water brash, Henry, that water comes up like that. I feel better now. Let me lie down here a minute."

Henry went back to the table. "Heart acting up. That's it. Let him alone."

The men at the table sat wide-eyed and very silent. Henry sat down in his chair. "He'll be all right. Those attacks don't mean anything. My uncle

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used to fall right down on the street if he had one coming on, and just lie there on his stomach a minute, and then he was all right. He'd get up and walk right on after that."

Sam fell asleep and the men went on playing. It was a good game and nobody wanted to stop it. When the light began coming through the window, Sam sat up. He had forgotten where he was and was surprised to see the poker game in progress. He felt tired, but not sick.

"I see you're still at it."

"Do you want to get back in the game?" Kryle asked.

"No, I'll watch you." He sat down at the table. The light through the windows was brighter. Sam's watch said six fifteen. The room was full of tobacco smoke, and the table was a mess of spilled liquor, empty bottles, and partly-filled glasses. The floor around the card-table was littered with cigarette and cigar ashes and butts of cigarettes. The air in the room was foul.

"I better go back to the hotel," Sam said.

"Do you feel all right?" Kryle said.

"Yes, I feel all right. So long, boys, good luck."

Newberry remembered that Sam was ahead of the game. He was losing. He started to say something, but only looked up at Sam, and then gave up the idea. The fellow was sick, you could see that.

During the night the air had cleared. There was no sign of rain, and a cool, brisk breeze blew down the city streets. The sky was bright though it was not yet full daylight. A few hurrying people were on the streets. Sam walked slowly back to his hotel.

He felt weak but clear in the head. Walking down a hill he felt as if his feet were bouyed up from the street and his body seemed light as though he were in a fever. Everything he saw seemed unusually clear and distinct.

Two workmen, with lunch pails and greasy overalls, passed him. He looked at them very carefully. They paid him no attention, but walked on talking to each other. He saw more workmen walking singly down a side street. An old night-watchman, hobbling along the street, looked Sam over carefully. Sam looked away from him. Some day working men would rise. It was early to begin a day's work.

As Sam got nearer his hotel he hurried his steps. Two drunks passed him with arms around one another. They had a hard time getting along. Both wore old, worn clothing. Workmen out of jobs drunk on nigger gin. The stuff was poison.

Sam walked through the hotel entrance. The rubber matting which had been down during the previous day was rolled up now. Three old scrub-women were on their knees cleaning the marble floor of the lobby. Chairs were piled on tables. Only a few lights were lit overhead. The scrub-women paid no attention to Sam. He eyed them closely.

The elevator boy yawned and rubbed the sleep from his eyes. "Good morning, sir," he said.

"Good morning, boy. Ask the clerk to give me a call at eleven, will you?"

"Yes, sir, yes, sir, what's the number?"

"Eight thirty-two."

"Yes, sir."

In his room Sam took out Gerald's letter. His head felt clear, but he was unable to read the sentences. This irritated him. He put the letter down on the table and undressed. He very carefully folded his trousers and hung them over a chair arm. With equal care he hung up the remainder of his clothing. The newspaper he had bought the night before was still in his coat pocket. He tossed it on the table. Though his eyes were blurred he made out the word Germany in the banner headline. Trouble in Germany of some kind. He went to bed. It was too much, trying to figure it all out. Pearls were a thing of the past, old Joe Marple and his pearls. A thing of the past, a thing of the past. He couldn't get it out of his mind. It was as though it had some special meaning for him. A thing of the past.

After leaving the clean air of the street, Sam began to feel dopey. He was falling asleep almost against his will, with a kind of terror. The room seemed to dissolve before his eyes, then turned upside down for no reason.

At eleven o'clock the girl on the switchboard rang his telephone bell. There was no answer.

"Is eight thirty-two in his room?" she asked the clerk.

He gracefully circled on one toe and eyed the boxes at the back of the desk. "Eight thirty-two is in his room, the key's out."

"I can't get an answer."

"Try him again, he must have been up all night. Give him a real ring."

"That would wake up a dead man," she said, holding down on the button.

Easily, with no disturbance on his features, the clerk called a boy. "Take the pass key. See if eight thirty-two is in his room. Wake him up."

The boy came down again and leaned a scared face over the desk. He whispered to the clerk.

"Send up Doctor Lang, he's in his office," the clerk said.

"He isn't asleep," the boy said. "I touched him. Gee, I feel funny. I don't like to go in a room like that."

NEXT MONTH

FLOWERING WILDERNESS

by John Galsworthy

The new novel by the distinguished English writer is a notable addition to the fiction features of SCRIBNER'S MAGAZINE. The complete novel is in three numbers, beginning with the September number, published August 18.

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Most of the 5000 people who died last year from one particular form of cancer could have been saved if they had been warned in time of their impending danger — *and had acted without delay*

LAST year in the United States alone there were more than 5,000 deaths caused by rectal cancer. Had these cancers been discovered in their early stages, a large majority could have been operated upon successfully. Almost all of them could have been found by competent physicians making *thorough* physical examinations.

Either false modesty on the part of a patient who should be utterly frank and truthful with his physician, or disinclination on the part of a doctor to urge his patient to have only the most complete and searching examination possible — one or the other — may cause suffering and tragedy.

There are thousands of cases of unsuspected rectal cancer. In the beginning, they are usually painless. The first slight symptoms are often disregarded. They may be so similar to those of other ailments that only by a conscientious local examination can any doctor determine whether or not a cancer is present.

Irregular or abnormal conditions should be reported to and investigated by your doctor without delay. The discovery of rectal cancer in its early stages should not cause undue alarm. In most cases such a cancer can be removed with entire success.

The United States Army and Navy Medical Divisions, leading newspapers, magazines, the foremost doctors and health officials all over the country urge complete, periodic physical check-ups. It would be impossible to estimate correctly the amount of suffering such examinations prevent and the years of life they add.

A partial examination is valuable as far as it goes. But it is, after all, a compromise not to be tolerated if you wish to guard yourself in every way possible from needless loss of health due to unremoved growths or uncorrected impairments.

Everybody should have a health examination at least once a year — and it should be *complete*. Get the protection which medical and surgical science can provide.

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WINNERS OF THE SECOND $5000 CONTEST

JOHN HERRMANN

JOHN HERRMANN for "The Big Short Trip," published in this number.

THOMAS WOLFE for "A Portrait of Bascom Hawke," published in the April SCRIBNER'S.

The judges in the contest were:
Burton Rascoe, literary critic and editor.
William Soskin, literary editor of *The New York Evening Post.*
Edmund Wilson, literary and social critic, author of "Axel's Castle."

More than 1500 manuscripts were submitted. Of these, nine were selected for publication. After the judges submitted their votes, it was found that "A Portrait of Bascom Hawke" and "The Big Short Trip" were tied for first place. The two novels had such unusual merit and such contrasting qualities that the judges felt it would be unfair, and perhaps impossible, to choose between them.

One other short novel of unusual merit, yet unpublished, was selected by the judges for special mention:
"Mountain Idyll" by Emmett Gowen
It will be published in a later issue of the Magazine. The high ranking stories already published are:

"The Cloud of Witnesses" by Cornelia Evans Goodhue (November, 1931)
"Mill Girls" by Sherwood Anderson (January, 1932)
"Her Son" by Edith Wharton (February, 1932)
"Love's a Grown-up God" by Arthur Tuckerman (March, 1932)
"The Cracked Looking-Glass" by Katherine Anne Porter (May, 1932)
"The Happiest Time" by Grace Flandrau (June, 1932)

THOMAS WOLFE

JOHN HERRMANN was born in Lansing, Mich., in 1900, and lived there in the winters and in Northern Michigan in the summers. His father's family came from Ober Hessen, Germany, and his mother from old Pennsylvania-German and New England stock. When he was 15, and every summer thereafter, he went on the road as a travelling salesman, selling everything from books to jewelry. He spent several summers peddling garden seed through the mining mountain country of Kentucky and West Virginia. After high school he went to Washington to study law but dropped that to become a newspaper correspondent and for several months was the youngest member of the press gallery. He went to New York for more education and got a travelling job instead and ended up at the University of Michigan. He quit that to go to Europe and went to the University of Munich and afterward moved around from Vienna to Paris. His first published work appeared in the Contact edition of Contemporary Writers printed in Paris. Contact Editions, Paris, brought out his first novel "What Happens," which the U. S. Customs officials objected to later but unsuccessfully, Mr. Herrmann winning his suit against them. His stories have appeared in *This Quarter, transition, New Masses,* SCRIBNER'S, and *American Mercury.* "Engagement," a novel, was published in the second "American Caravan." He is married to Josephine Herbst and now lives on a small farm in Pennsylvania. His novel "Summer is Ended" will appear in the fall. He spent last summer in Russia and "found the rest of the world dead compared to it."

THOMAS WOLFE was born in Asheville, North Carolina, in 1900. He graduated from the University of North Carolina at the age of 19. While there he was one of the original members of the Carolina Play-Makers and worked under Professor Frederick J. Koch. Three years later he received the degree of Master of Arts from Harvard, where he worked with George Pierce Baker in the 47 Workshop. "Look Homeward, Angel," his first novel, was begun while he was staying in England and the news that his manuscript would be published reached Mr. Wolfe three years later in Vienna. After leaving Harvard, he taught English literature at New York University but resigned in 1930 to give all his time to writing. "A Portrait of Bascom Hawke" and "The Web of Earth," long stories published in SCRIBNER'S, are his first work since "Look Homeward, Angel." He is at work on a new novel which it is hoped to publish shortly. It is part of a proposed saga to be called "October Fair." Sinclair Lewis, in his speech at Stockholm in accepting the Nobel Prize, said: "There is Thomas Wolfe, a child of, I believe, 30 or younger, whose only novel, "Look Homeward, Angel" is worthy to be compared with the best of our literary productions, a gargantuan creature with a great gusto of life."

WALTER LIGGETT is best known for his smashing articles on Prohibition which appeared in the old *Plain Talk.*

MORLEY CALLAGHAN will be represented on the fall book lists with his new novel, "Broken Journey."

ZELDA FITZGERALD is the wife of Scott Fitzgerald and, with the appearance of the fall books, will become a novelist herself. Her first book is "Save Me the Waltz."

WILLIAM HARLAN HALE was editor of *The Harkness Hoot* at Yale and author of "Challenge to Defeat" which appeared this spring.

ROBERT BRIFFAULT is internationally know as a thinker and writer. His latest book "Breakdown" has had incalculable influence and his great work "The Mothers" immediately set him in the forefront of present-day anthropologists. He is now at work on a new book, "The Five Furies," a further analysis of the motives which influence governments and peoples.

JOHN RICHELSEN is a former Presbyterian minister in Buffalo and still lives there as a business man. He has previously contributed to the Magazine.

RION BERCOVICI is a son of Konrad Bercovici and his early years are well depicted in the present article. He is now living in New York.

MAUREEN McKERNAN, although living and working in New York City, allows no one to malign her native State, Kansas. Her objections appear herein.

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Ways to Pay Debts

By S. Palmer Harman

THE burden of debt is said to be the principal reason why the country does not come out of the depression. From time to time the explanations vary, depending on which phase of the difficulty is uppermost in the news; just now it is debt, because a considerable number of corporations have been going into receivership through inability to meet their obligations, and because the statesmen at Lausanne have been wrestling with the greatest debt problem in all history. There can be no doubt that debt is a vast factor in the depression, and probably the most important concrete factor, most of the others having to do with such intangibles as lack of confidence, unbalanced production, the sins and follies of individual enterprise, and the like. It is not possible to take positive action regarding an intangible ailment, which falls in the realm of psychology, but an increasing number of people believe that it is possible to do something about an overburdening debt. Hence we have endless plans, scientific or crude, for getting rid of the debt problem, not by increasing the resources available for payment, but by decreasing the amount of the debt. All these plans centre in the idea of inflation or currency reform.

The basic idea of these schemes can be exposed mathematically, with beautiful simplicity. Suppose a corporation, a government or an individual has 100 units of income, or purchasing power, at present prices. Offsetting this stand 90 units of current operating expenses or living expenses, and 20 units of debt payments. It is obvious that a deficit of 10 units is steadily being incurred, and unless something is done about it bankruptcy will result. In that case the debt will be cancelled or adjusted. Now suppose that the amount of money in the country, and with it the national income, were doubled and uniformly distributed, bringing a 100 per cent increase in prices. Income will then stand at 200 units instead of 100, operating or living expenses at 180 instead of 90, and debt payments will remain at 20, as before. Instead of incurring a deficit, the debtor is now able to meet his obligations and "break even" on a basis of 200 units income and outgo.

That, concisely, is the principle which it is proposed to invoke. Like so many other principles, it rests upon a number of assumptions which need to be clearly looked into. Note that the plan can

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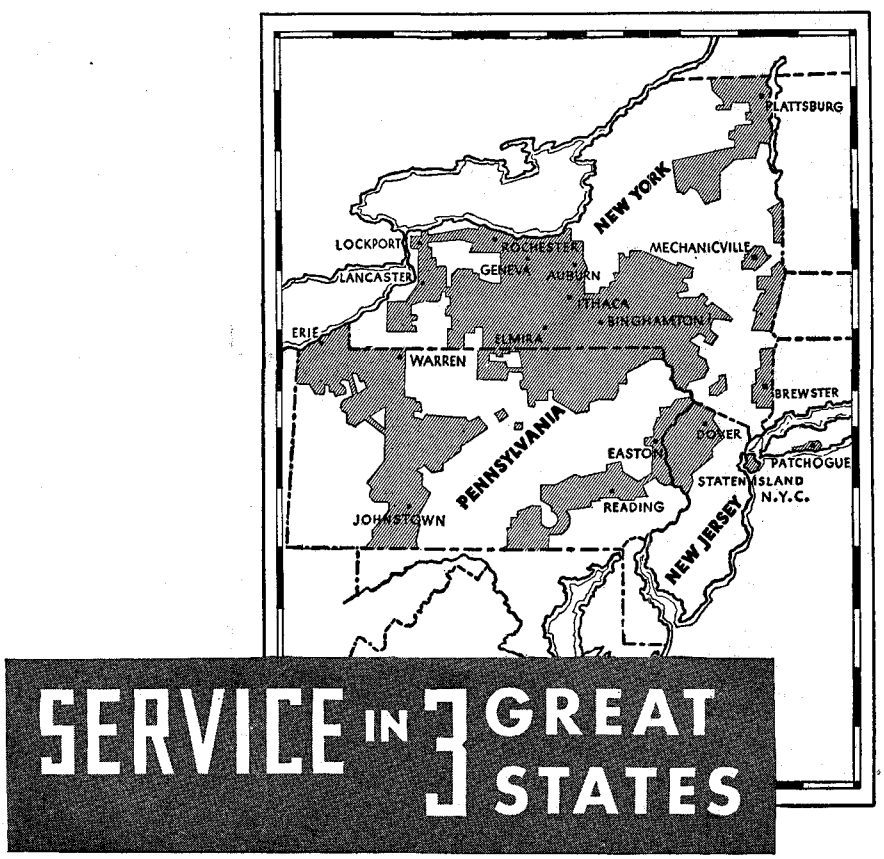
only operate through a rise in prices, for the essence of the idea is that those who have goods for sale shall be able to realize higher prices for them, thus providing the resources to pay off a debt which remains fixed in monetary terms and which is actually reduced in terms of commodity values. But a great deal more is required to double prices than a doubling of the amount of money in the country. The disposition to spend money is the vital thing. Because the disposition to spend is usually present, its importance is sometimes overlooked. This disposition is what provides the "velocity" of monetary circulation; if that is lacking, the mere volume is ineffective on prices. The supply of money in the United States, outside of the banks and the Treasury, is 17 per cent greater than at this time in 1929, but the wholesale price level is 32 per cent lower.

No one can tell what complex tangle of human motives, fears and purposes would be created by a sudden doubling of the money supply; no one can calculate the factor of velocity in advance; no one can say what would happen to prices. If prices did rise in proportion, however, it is obvious that two things would occur. Holders of bonds, mortgages, and other claims on fixed amounts of money would suffer a reduction in their wealth, and that reduction would apply universally, without regard to whether the debtor was able to pay on the old scale of values or not; and people who have managed to pay their debts even under present trying conditions would be no better off than before, since the cost of what they buy would rise proportionately to their income. They would have no added purchasing power to contribute toward business revival.

The country has plainly shown, thus far, that it prefers to deal with the debt problem by individual cases rather than by a horizontal scaling down through inflation or a change in the currency, which would penalize the prudent investor along with the reckless, and which would relieve debtors who actually have no need of relief. Adjustment through the individual method is fraught with dangers and losses, too. It usually takes place through reorganization, receivership or bankruptcy, and is a slow and costly process. An alternative is readjustment through negotiation and consent, but this is likely to be thwarted by the quite human inclination to hold on desperately to all claims and to enforce payment to the utmost. The St. Louis-Southwestern Railroad, which recently was on the verge of receivership, asked its bondholders to send in their bonds and accept, in payment, 50 per cent in cash and 50 per cent in new obligations. The consent of 90 per cent of the bondholders was required. That amount was obtained with the utmost difficulty, and the 10 per cent who held out (with perfect legal justification, it is true) obtained full payment in cash. Such precedents do not brighten the outlook for voluntary reorganizations and scale-downs of debt.

In considering this debt problem it is well to keep one point in mind. No evidence has been presented which clearly proves that the debt burden, as a whole, is insupportable. Corporations sold enormous amounts of common stock prior to the collapse of the boom. No corporate obligation attaches to these shares; dividends may be omitted and the stockholders' property all but wiped out for the protection of the bondholder. That is what is taking place on a great scale today. The stockholder, who enjoyed the profits in prosperity, is called upon to bear the burden in adversity. Common stocks, which got us into trouble in 1929, are preventing bankruptcies in 1932.



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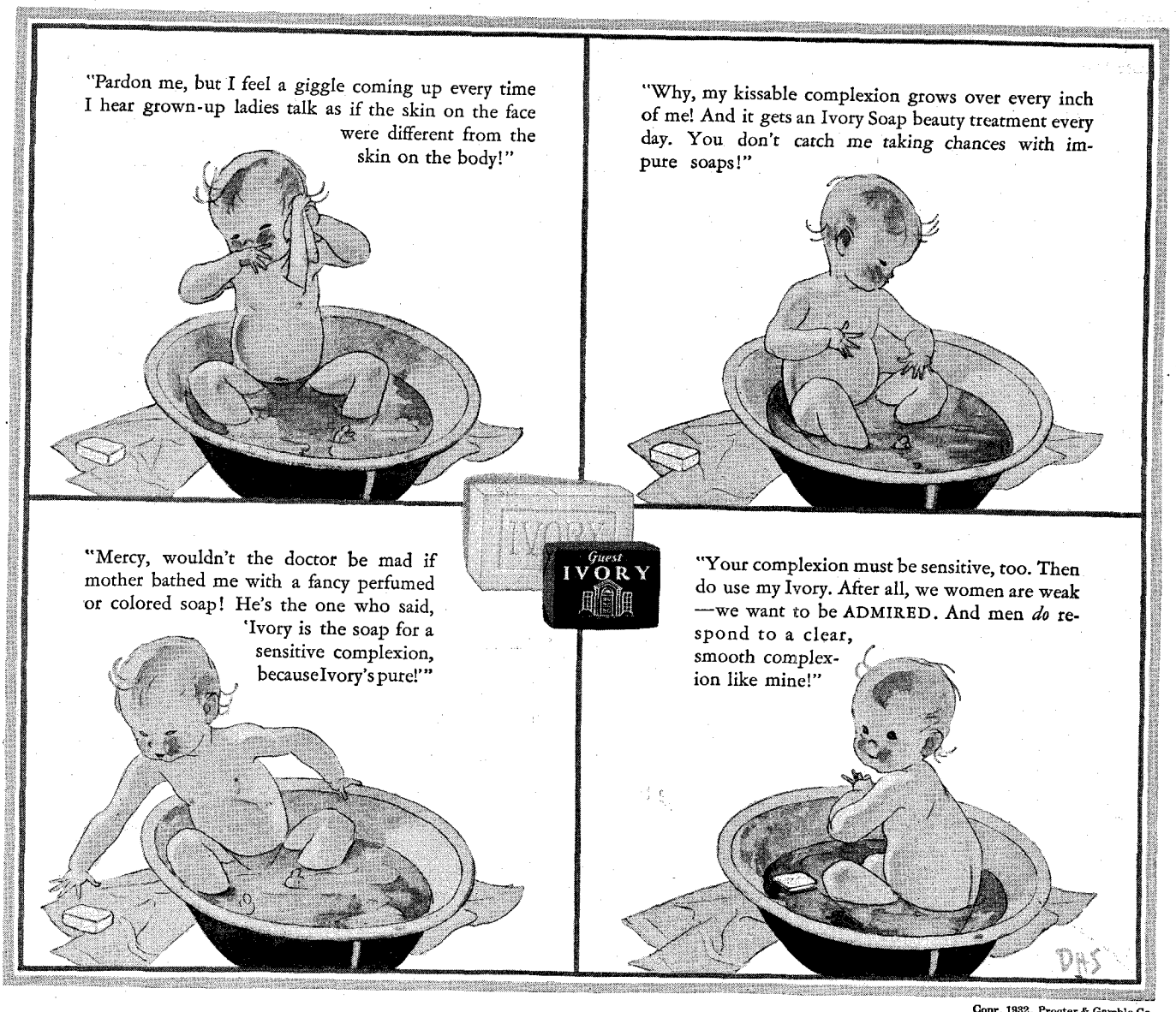
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LITERARY SIGN-POSTS

THE TINDER BOX OF ASIA, BY GEORGE E. SOKOLSKY. *Doubleday, Doran.* $2.50.

To write a decorous and decent account of what has been taking place during the last ten years in far-eastern Asia would be much like editing Brantôme or Casanova for the use of Sunday schools. Only a Japanese diplomatist could do it. But the grin on the countenance of the Nipponese would, I imagine, be broadened by the perusal of the New York *Times* correspondent's able piecing together of all the news from Tokyo, Mukden, and Shanghai that's fit to print. Mr. Sokolsky is said by his publishers to be considered as the most competent authority "by those who have economic or political interests in the Far East." Even an Asiatic could not have done better by way of saving the "face" of all concerned, Japanese, Western powers, League of Nations, Nanking, Washington, Wall Street, and Wesleyan missionaries. The only people who look rather silly are the Chinese people.

Mr. Sokolsky makes the cryptic remark that "After the Great War international morals were arbitrarily changed." Having rubbed my eyes to assure myself that I had read correctly, I fell to speculating as to whether the changed morals had been surpassed in the age of Machiavelli or of the Münster congress. An adequate history of the application of those morals to China will probably not be written for some years, because most of it is secret history, and the motives involved and means employed are so unavowable as to verge on indecency. One of the many embarrassing perplexities of the Western powers in regard to the puppet government of Manchoukuo is that the Nanking government, founded by the Shanghai bankers by means of an initial payment of $15,000,000 to the renegade Chiang Kai-shek, the Chinese Mussolini, and maintained to the last cent by foreign money, is no less a puppet government. Writing to the United States ambassador, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of that government, Doctor Hwang Fu, assured him that "With the extermination of the communists, the friendly relations between the Chinese and American peoples will be rendered easier." In their dealings with China, the Russian Soviets enjoy, Mr. Sokolsky complains, an unfair advantage: they are able to use realistic language and to face facts, whereas the powers are under the necessity of drawing a decent veil over facts and of using diplomatic language. The strength of the Japanese kettle's position lies in the difficulty felt by European and American pots in making any reference to its complexion. It is an entirely false picture which represents the powers as standing by with folded hands while the Japanese militarists are battering down China. The powers have been no less active, but their activities have been less noisy and spectacular than the slaughter of women and children, which Mr. Sokolsky, in his decorous way, dismisses as mere melodrama evoking "memories of bleeding Belgium and that sort of thing." He is a realist, not to be put off by such sentimental stuff. That is why he enjoys the confidence of "those who have economic or political interests in the Far East."

Although the author's sympathies are plain, the book is written in that tone of judicial impartiality and with that fastidious reluctance to express an opinion which lend so much force to propaganda. It is good journalism.

ROBERT BRIFFAULT.

SAINT SATURNIN, BY JEAN SCHLUMBERGER. *Dodd, Mead.* $2.50.

Much of the best French writing shares certain qualities of the worst French acting, as it seems difficult for the Gallic temperament to resist the charms of bombast, flamboyant theatrical gestures, declamation. Mr. Schlumberger is no exception, but when he forgets that he is writing a novel and allows his very real sympathies and talents to run off with him, he achieves fiction that it is a distinct pleasure to read.

Saint Saturnin was the ancestral home of the Colombes; at the opening of the story the family is gathered at the death-bed of Elisabeth, the mother. At the end, it has gathered again by the death-bed of William, the father. In the year-long interval the fortunes of the Colombes have declined, teetered to the brink of ruin and been partially retrieved, and Mr. Schlumberger has created a few solidly wrought characters. Old William, at the death of his wife, felt that his responsibilities towards his family had passed on with her, and it was a true and valid irony that found him on the verge of senile dementia when he desired to forge on to "great things." The progress of this decay is set forth with fascinating verisimilitude and sympathetic understanding, and the old man remains a fictional character of great vitality. Writing in the tradition of Flaubertian objectivity, Mr. Schlumberger makes it truly impossible for the reader to take sides. When he is exploiting William, your sympathy is all with him against the sons and daughter who are truly making his life miserable. When he is with the children, the reader wonders how he could ever have felt anything for an insane old man who was in the best way to encompass the ruin of a family with a tradition that reached back into history.

The translation, by Dorothy Bussy, is, with a few awkward exceptions, competently performed.

ALVAH C. BESSIE.

THE STORE, BY T. S. STRIBLING. *Doubleday, Doran.* $2.50.

Brilliance follows brilliance in Mr. Stribling's book, but there is no general, permanent blaze. The author manifests nearly every endowment of the real novelist; these endowments, however, are not made into that serene and glowing unity necessary for grandly successful fiction. The Florence, Alabama, 1884, of "The Store" just swarms with motion, for Mr. Stribling's mind is constantly on the move. He is up to something imaginative and active every moment. So he makes psychologies collide and merge generously; he is lavish in his portrayal of the usual human possession of pangs and gratifications; his mind's creatures are always kept busy. All this is fine, for life does swarm, and, though quiet, is never languid. Yet I felt that the greatly desirable heated junction of all these activities and beings was not present. I read the story of Colonel Miltiades Vaiden, sensitive gentleman of the South and Confederate veteran, and uttered two Bravoes!—but the third I could not give. The roof simply was not reached, that's why. None the less for Mr. Stribling to maintain in the reader the warmth and the enthusiasm that he does, is intensely praiseworthy. "The Store" has narrative power, irony, humor, sharp and brooding revealing of character, a large knowledge of the agonizing complications of the life of

(*Continued on page 5*)

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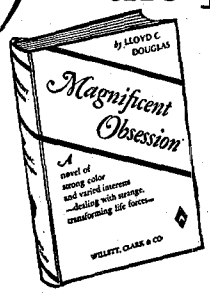
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[It has frequently been said of this strange story that the people who read it are never quite the same again.]

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the Southern Negro, and even a taking mysticism. The romantic and longing Colonel Vaiden tries to bring back the South of manners and white pillars, honor, and pleasing moonlight; and impressive and entertaining things occur. He deceives J. Handback, man of business and lust. He gets into jail for a while. He acquires the love of and marries Sydna, daughter of the man he saw die in 1862 at Shiloh and the winning rival in his love for Sydna's mother. He is the cause of the lynching of Toussaint, proud white-Negro boy, and his son by Gracie, cream-colored, wise, and utterly alive negress. As all this is told by Mr. Stribling, life certainly does abound. Trembling Negroes are here and belligerent, devilishly dumb poor whites. We have lustful churchgoers and mightily cunning lawyer-governors. We have Sandusky, a Dickens and Dostoievsky-like bit of tricky, lawyer flesh. We have Sydna, whose love is sweetly subterranean; and Jerry Catlin, who uses the Hindu Yogis in his amorous life. There is Landers, the hated Republican postmaster, alone, and given to supernatural imaginings and lucidly freezing supernatural stories. There is enough in "The Store" for a continent of a novel. Had Mr. Stribling made his successive imaginative energies into one big energy, the bells of something like American literature could be ringing freely, loudly and truly. Sadly, they must wait.

ELI SIEGEL.

COUP D'ETAT: THE TECHNIQUE OF REVOLUTION, BY CURZIO MALAPARTE. TRANSLATED BY SYLVIA SAUNDERS. *Dutton*. $2.50.

All good parliamentary governments would do well to ban this little book from general circulation and to make it compulsory reading for servants of the state, especially the military and the police. Signor Malaparte's essay on the technique of revolution is packed with dynamite. He advances the theory—and brings plenty of proof to bear as witness—that the tactics of insurrection are "independent of the general condition of the country or of a revolutionary state of affairs favorable to insurrection" and that, given a compact, integrated unit of revolutionary technicians, any government may be undermined and the seizure of power effected.

Signor Malaparte's book thus bears somewhat the same relation to our own troubled day that Machiavelli's "The Prince" bore to his: both works demonstrate how a state may be captured and defended. The author may be presumed to know whereof he writes. Himself a revolutionary, he aided in the seizure of Florence in the Fascist coup of 1922 and accompanied Mussolini on his historic march to Rome. His book is at once an analysis of the Marxian machinery of insurrection and an account of modern dictators—Lenin, Trotsky, and Stalin in Russia, Mussolini in Italy, Pilsudski in Poland, Primo de Rivera in Spain, not to mention the caustic account of Hitler in Germany—and the means by which they came to power.

Perhaps the most brilliant single paper in what is altogether a remarkable book is the one devoted to an elucidation of the Bolshevik revolution of October, 1917, and of Trotsky's classic coup. Classic because for the first time it invalidated completely all the traditional methods of safeguarding the modern state from overthrow and demonstrated clearly the distinction between revolutionary strategy—Lenin—and revolutionary tactics—Trotsky. What was needed, Trotsky proved, was not to overthrow the government in order to seize the state, but to seize the state in order to overthrow the government. Trotsky's "army" for overthrowing Kerenski consisted of a thousand workmen, soldiers, and sailors operating in small units in broad daylight under the very noses of the police, his tactics a series of "invisible manœuvres" calculated to bring the government to a checkmate before it quite knew what had happened.

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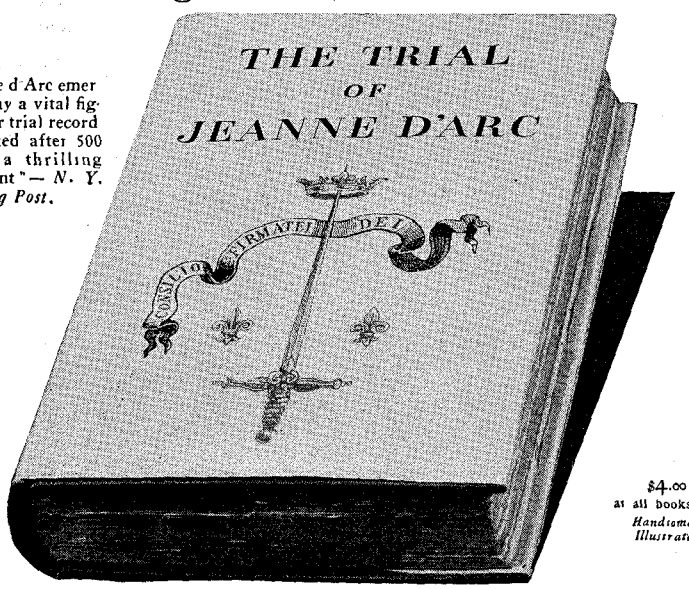

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The Questions

1. Who was the mother of Solomon?
2. Is the whale a fish?
3. What is the literal meaning of malaria?
4. What are the five Great Lakes?
5. Who was Iris?
6. What is a catwalk?
7. When was Pompeii destroyed?
8. Of what word is spats an abbreviation?
9. In what common drink is tannic acid found?
10. What is an apiary?

The Answers

1. Bath-sheba.
2. No. It is a mammal.
3. Bad air. (Italian *mala aria*.)
4. Superior, Huron, Michigan, Erie, Ontario.
5. Goddess of the Rainbow in Greek mythology.
6. Footway along keel of a rigid airship.
7. A.D. 79.
8. Spatterdashes.
9. Tea.
10. A place where bees are kept.

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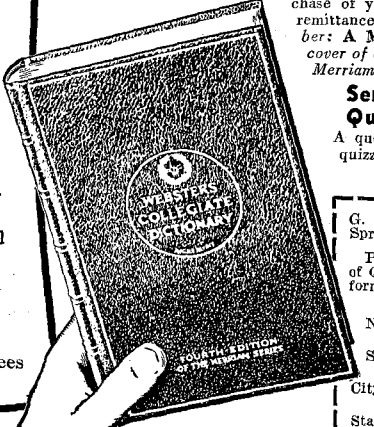

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